American History

Harry Truman's Insurance Crusade

Fleeting Heyday of Interurban Rail

Strikers Win in San Antonio

Sex Education the Scandalous Way

Klondike Fever

Miners, guns, and money—the stampede for gold

The gold rush drew 100,000 dreamers to the Klondike; 500 of them became millionaires.

October 2019
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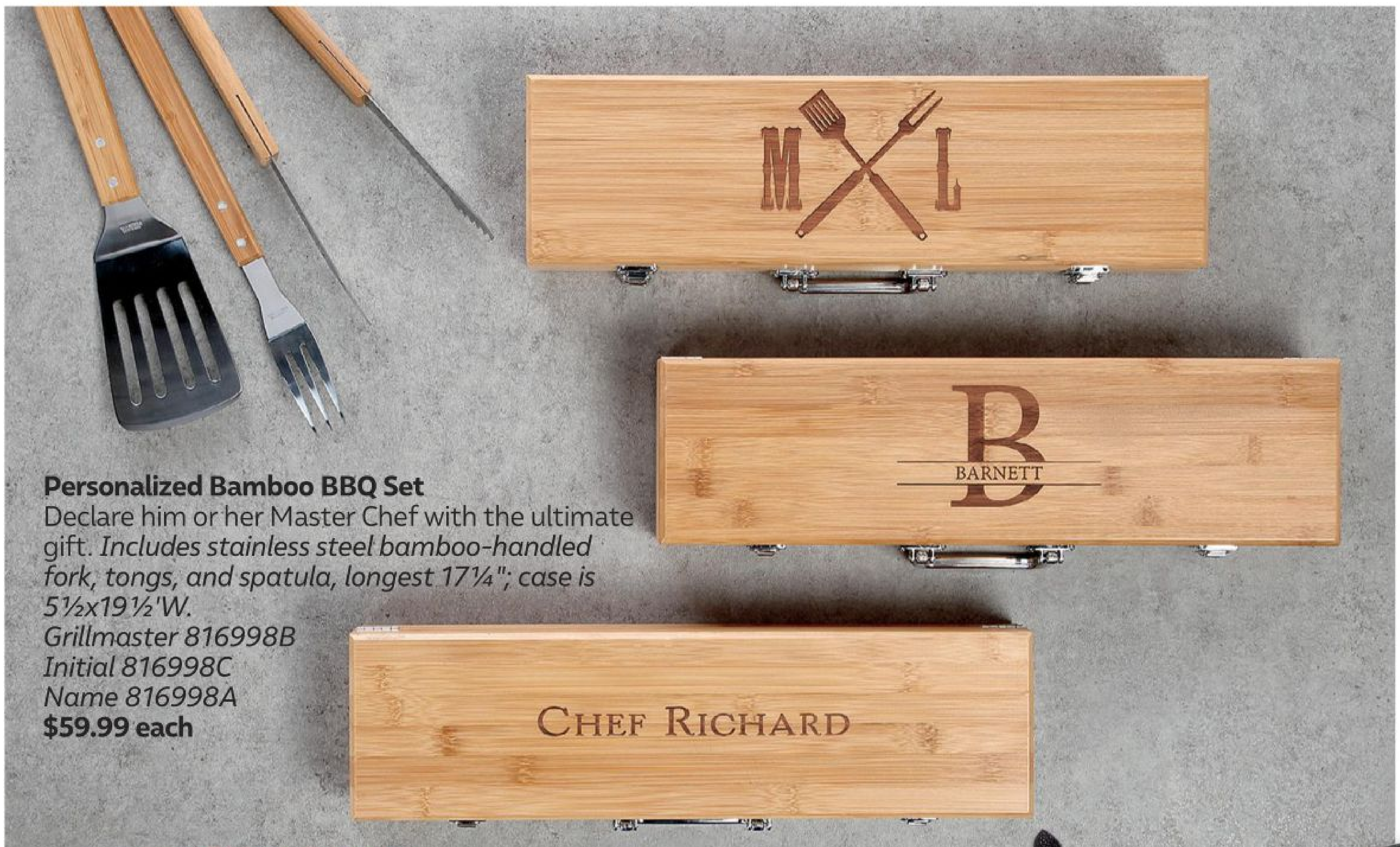

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ON THE COVER: *Miners display nuggets panned in 1901 at a Klondike claim owned by S.T. Kincaid.*

American History

OCTOBER 2019

FEATURES

32 **The Weight of Gold**
A glittering discovery in the Klondike set miners panning and America and Canada at odds *By Mike Coppock*

40 **Give 'Em Healthcare, Harry**
Howls of "socialized medicine!" greeted Truman's 1946 try at national health coverage *By Joseph Connor*

48 **Off the Rails**
When America traveled by train, interurban rail enjoyed a brief, brilliant heyday *By Raanan Geberer*

56 **Shell Game**
In 1938, pecan shellers in San Antonio defied that Texas city's establishment *By Barbara Finlay*

DEPARTMENTS

6 **Mosaic**
News from out of the past

12 **Contributors**

14 **Interview**
Historian Daniel Immerwahr says America papers over its empire

16 **Déjà Vu**
Americans want stand-out presidents—provided they're regular folks

20 **American Schemers**
"Kroger" Babb made a bundle selling scandalous sex as sober cinema

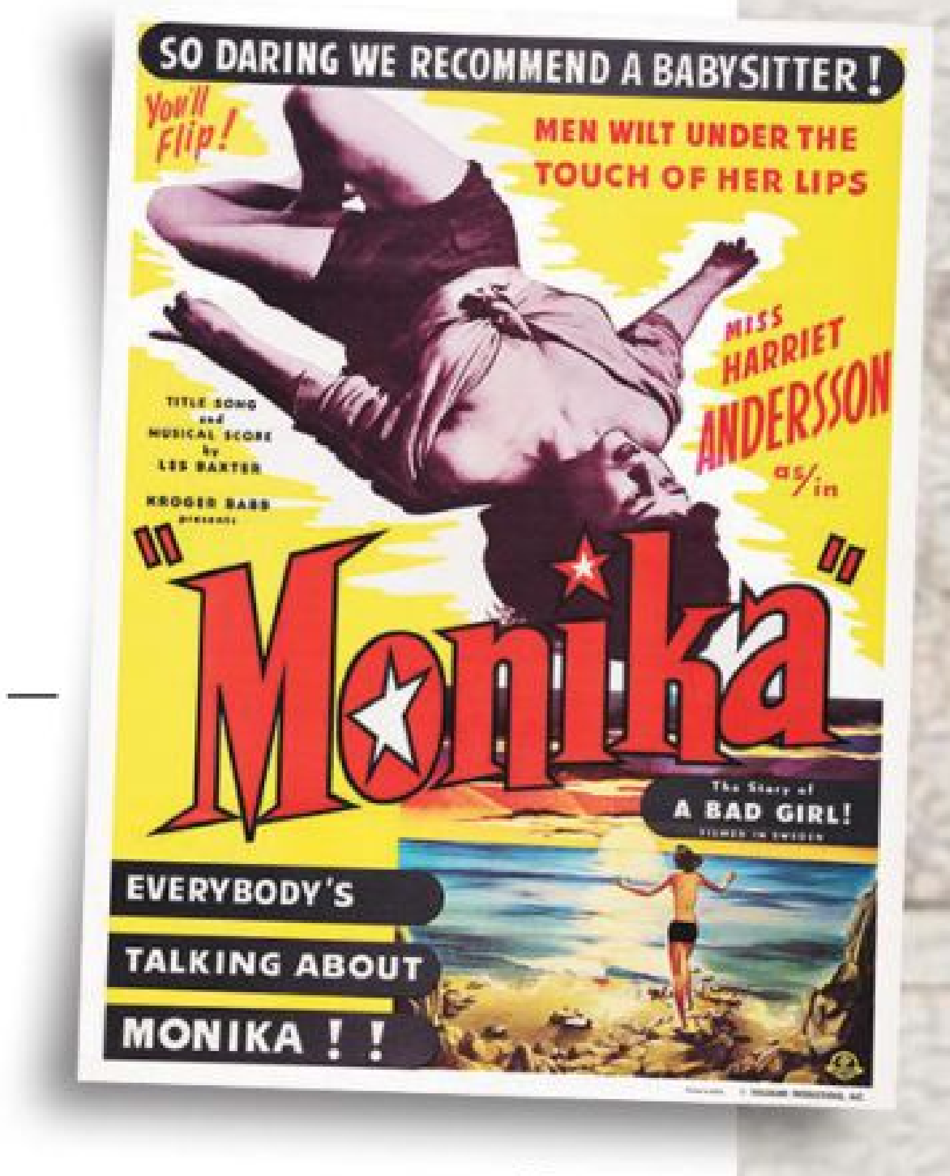
22 **SCOTUS 101**
Discord over Vietnam earned public school students the right to free speech

24 **Cameo**
Unbending faith and great charisma made Kateri Tekakwitha the first Native American saint

26 **Style**
Lady Liberty and Oheka Castle

64 **Reviews**

72 **An American Place**
Vandergrift, Pennsylvania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MISS HARRIET ANDERSSON as/in
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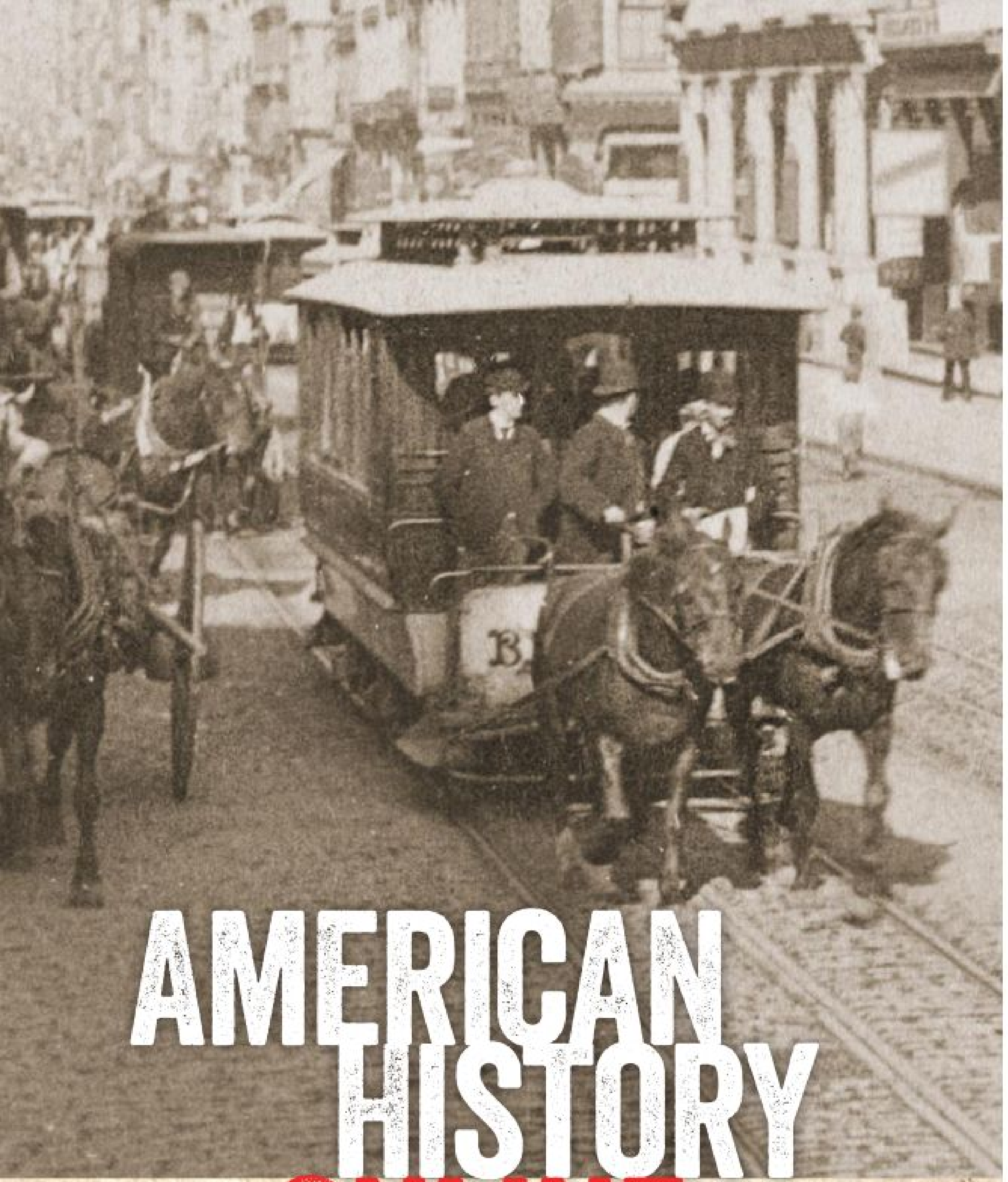
The Story of A BAD GIRL!
EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT MONIKA!!

20
An early Bergman film got Babbed as smut to sell tickets.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SETH ANDERSON/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; SCIENCE HISTORY IMAGES/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES; EVERETT COLLECTION; SAN ANTONIO LIGHT PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION; UTSA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS; BASS PHOTO COLLECTION, INDIANA HISTORICAL COLLECTION; COVER: BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES



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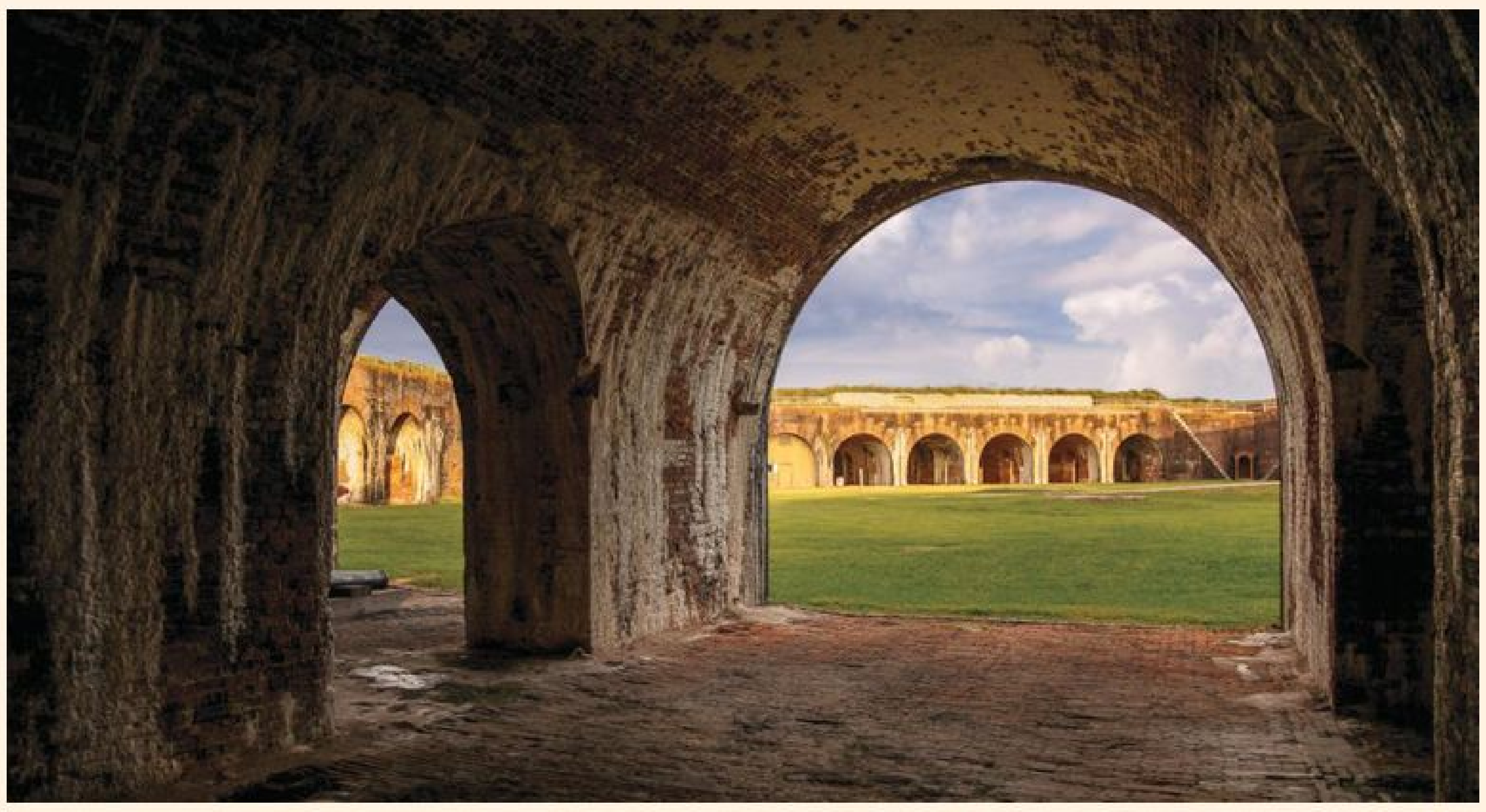
Explore the History of Alabama's Gulf Coast



Visit historic Fort Morgan and travel back in time when the thundering boom of cannons protected the turquoise waterways guarding Mobile, Alabama. And imagine Union Admiral David Farragut's immortal shout of "Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!" as he led his ships through a treacherous stretch of mined water in Mobile Bay while under fire from Fort Morgan's guns. The picturesque fort, built between 1819 and 1823, is a site not to be missed on any visit to Mobile Bay. Another point of interest is the Mobile Bay Civil War Trail, an impressive, historic passageway stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to North Mobile County. Tour the many unique, historical museums and sites throughout Alabama's Gulf Coast, including Native American museums and mounds; lighthouses; plantations and antebellum mansions; military history, maritime and railroad museums; agricultural and cultural museums; and much more. Visit GulfShores.com for details.

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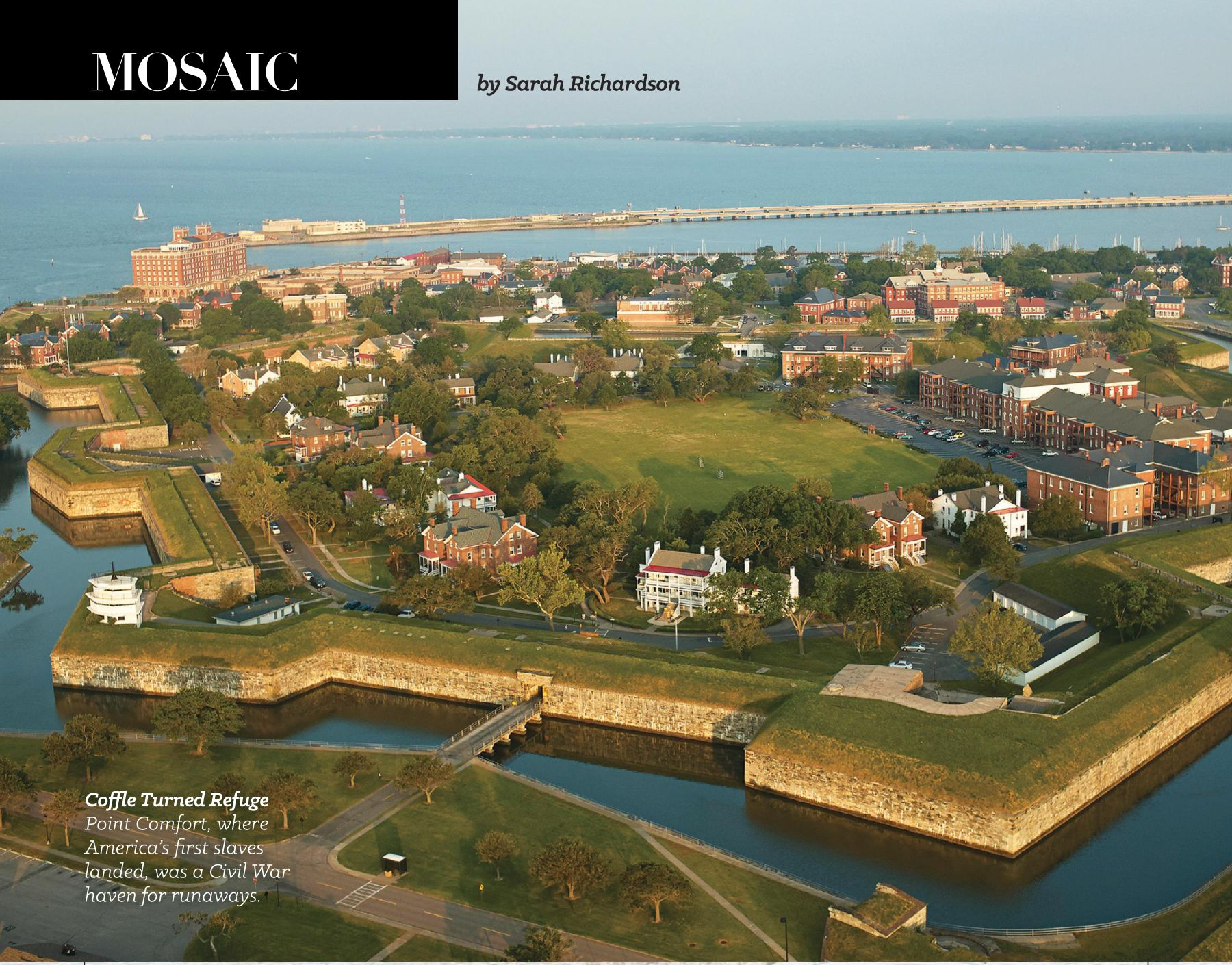
by Sarah Richardson



Coffle Turned Refuge
Point Comfort, where America's first slaves landed, was a Civil War haven for runaways.

WESTEND61 GMBH/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

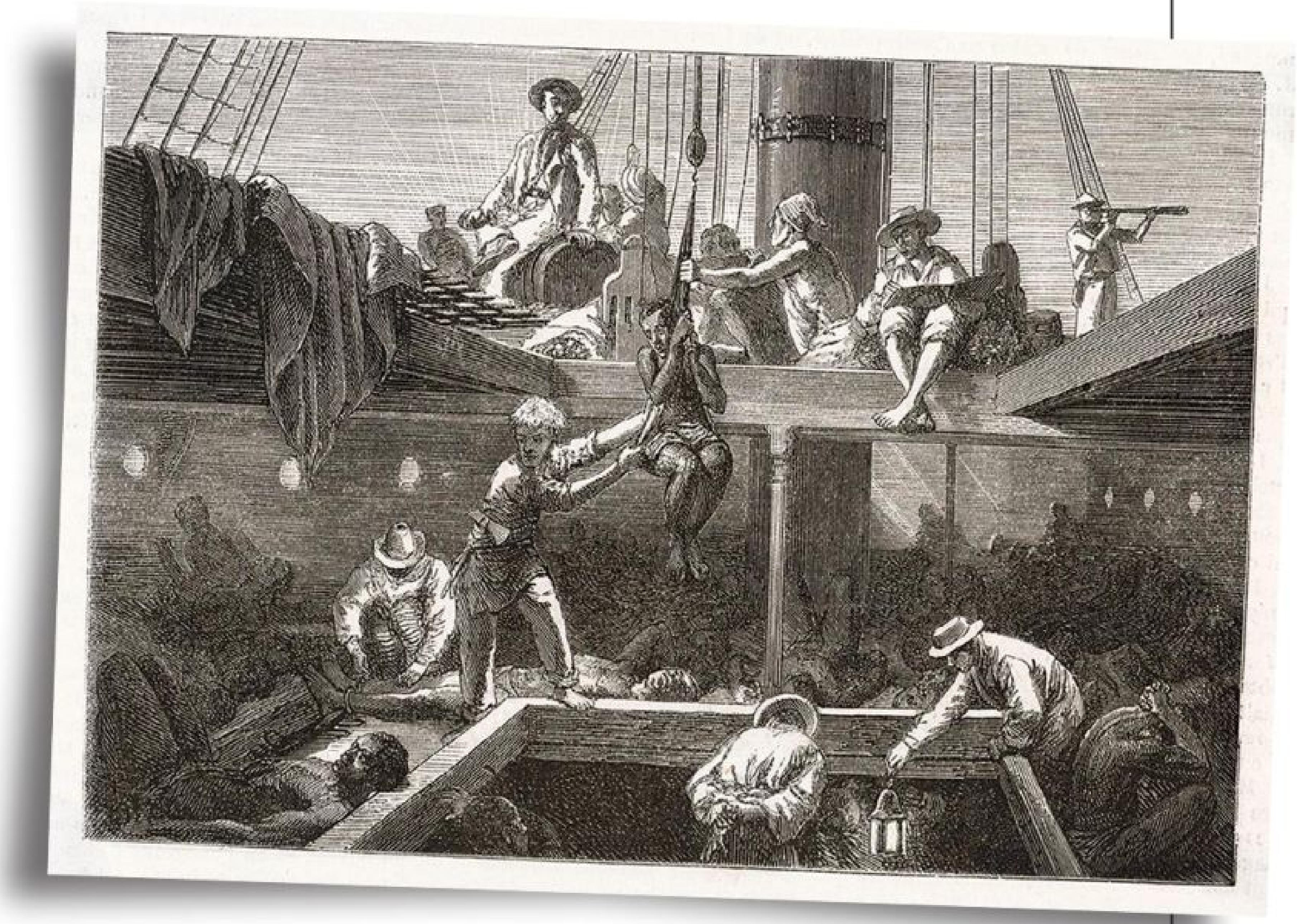
Slavery's Start

Four centuries ago *White Lion*, a British privateer flying a Dutch flag, landed at Old Point Comfort on Chesapeake Bay. Today the site of Fort Monroe National Monument, the point was where the *White Lion* crew delivered some 20 people kidnapped by Portuguese colonists and Imbangala mercenaries from Ndongo, a village in what is now Angola—the first Africans forced to toil in an English colony in North America. The quadricentennial of this transaction, prelude to nearly 250 years of African enslavement in English North America, is being remembered all year at Fort Monroe. Activities August 23-25 will highlight the captives' arrival and promote a newly opened visitors' center.

The Africans had been aboard *San Juan Bautista*, a Spanish slaving ship *White Lion* had seized thinking it bore treasure. Records show that at Old Point Comfort the crew traded the captured Africans to Sir George Yeardley, the Virginia Colony's governor, and supply officer Abraham Piersey, for food and supplies. The two in turn likely sold the Africans as slaves in Jamestown, the colony's capital. During the War of 1812, Fort Monroe was built at the point. That federal presence set the stage for another key moment. In 1861 three fugitive slaves sought refuge at the fort. The runaways' owner requested their return. U.S. Army Major General Benjamin Butler refused. Because Virginia had seceded, Butler said, he had no duty to return the men, instead deeming them "contraband of war." The three went to work for the Union army. Eventually thousands of contrabands entered Union territory. Fort Monroe become known as "the freedom fort."

President Abraham Lincoln spent four days at Fort Monroe in May 1862 planning an attack on Norfolk, Virginia. Former Confederate president Jefferson Davis was incarcerated there for two years following his capture in May 1865. Old Point Comfort became a well-known tourist destination, boasting several hotels. After the fort was decommissioned in 2011, President Barack Obama named it a National Historic Monument.

Last American Slave Ship Found



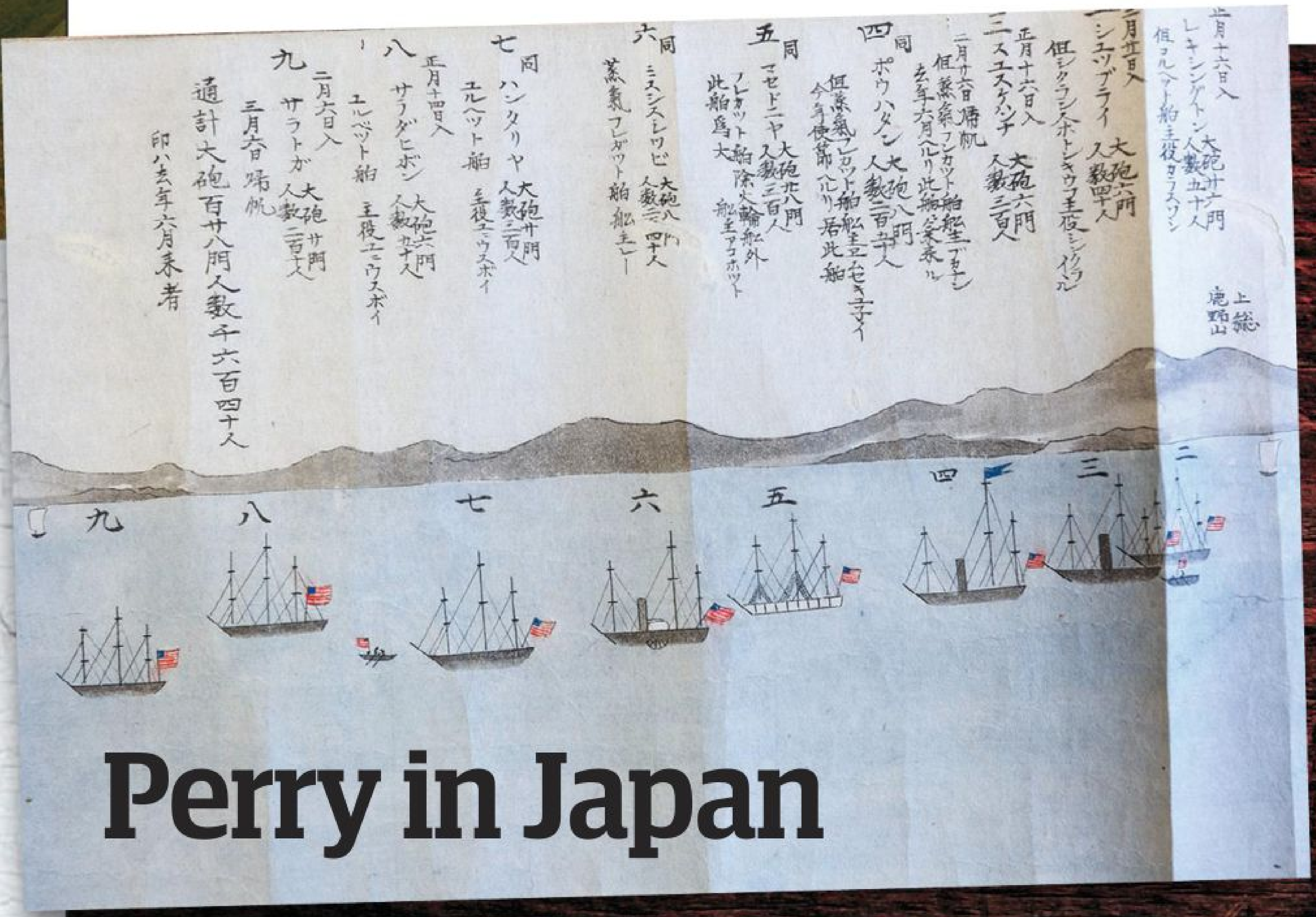
The last American vessel known to import captives from Africa has been found, the Alabama Historical Commission says. In 1860, Captain William Foster scuttled *Clotilda* in the Mobile River. The ship had returned from Benin, Africa, hauling 109 captives—52 years after the United States banned trade in foreign slaves. In 2018 reporter Ben Raines claimed to have found the hulk, but that wreck was too new. Interest in *Clotilda* prompted a thorough survey of a channel of the Mobile River. Among 14 wrecks located by the survey, sponsored by the Alabama Historical Commission and partners, one resembled *Clotilda*. On 11 points of comparison, including size, composition, age, and having a centerboard for ocean sailing—that hulk matched. The study suggests this wreck is most likely the vessel that made a last run to Africa to buy slaves for illegal sale in the United States.

Clotilda was built in Mobile in 1855 by Foster, a shipbuilder from Nova Scotia. The commission's report traces its voyages in and around the Gulf 1856-59. Designed to be faster and hold more than the typical schooner, *Clotilda* shuttled around the Caribbean hauling comestibles and lumber, including materials for barrel-making at Cuba's vast sugar plantations. Foster and his partner disguised the vessel's slave-trading nature before it departed on its illegal voyage.

Human Cargo
An 1861 engraving shows slavers loading Africans aboard a vessel for transport.

The study's authors recommend preserving the wreck in situ and commemorating its significance with a landmark on shore.

Descendants of kidnapped Africans who survived the slave ship's last voyage live three miles north of Mobile in Africatown, a community that sustained African customs and language for decades.



Perry in Japan

A panorama of the 1854 arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry and his fleet of American warships in what is now Tokyo Bay has a new home at the Library of Congress. As the ceremony was taking place, the Japanese artist and scholar assigned to document the event, Otsuki Bankei, and two assistants inked 30 rice paper panels comprising a continuous image almost 38 feet long depicting 20 scenes, including portraits of Perry and his sailors. The 1854 event formally opened commerce between the United States and Japan, which had traded with only Korea, Holland, and the rulers of what is now Okinawa. The 200-year ban on commerce with the West had begun to fray months earlier, when Perry arrived with two paddlewheel steamships and two sloops, threatening the Japanese leadership unless they started doing business with the United States and began supplying coal to Asia-bound American steamships. On March 8, 1854, Japanese leaders reluctantly agreed to open their ports to the American fleet—nine ships equipped with more than 100 heavy guns and close to 1,800 sailors. The "black ships of evil mien," as the Japanese called them, powerfully showcased American technological superiority. Among gifts Perry gave Japanese leaders were a miniature railroad locomotive, guns, clocks, a telegraph, a telescope, and an edition of *Birds of America* by John James Audubon. Gifts from the Japanese featured silk, dolls, porcelain, umbrellas, and handicrafts. The scroll was boxed for 150 years before the Library of Congress acquired it from a rare book dealer in New York earlier this year.

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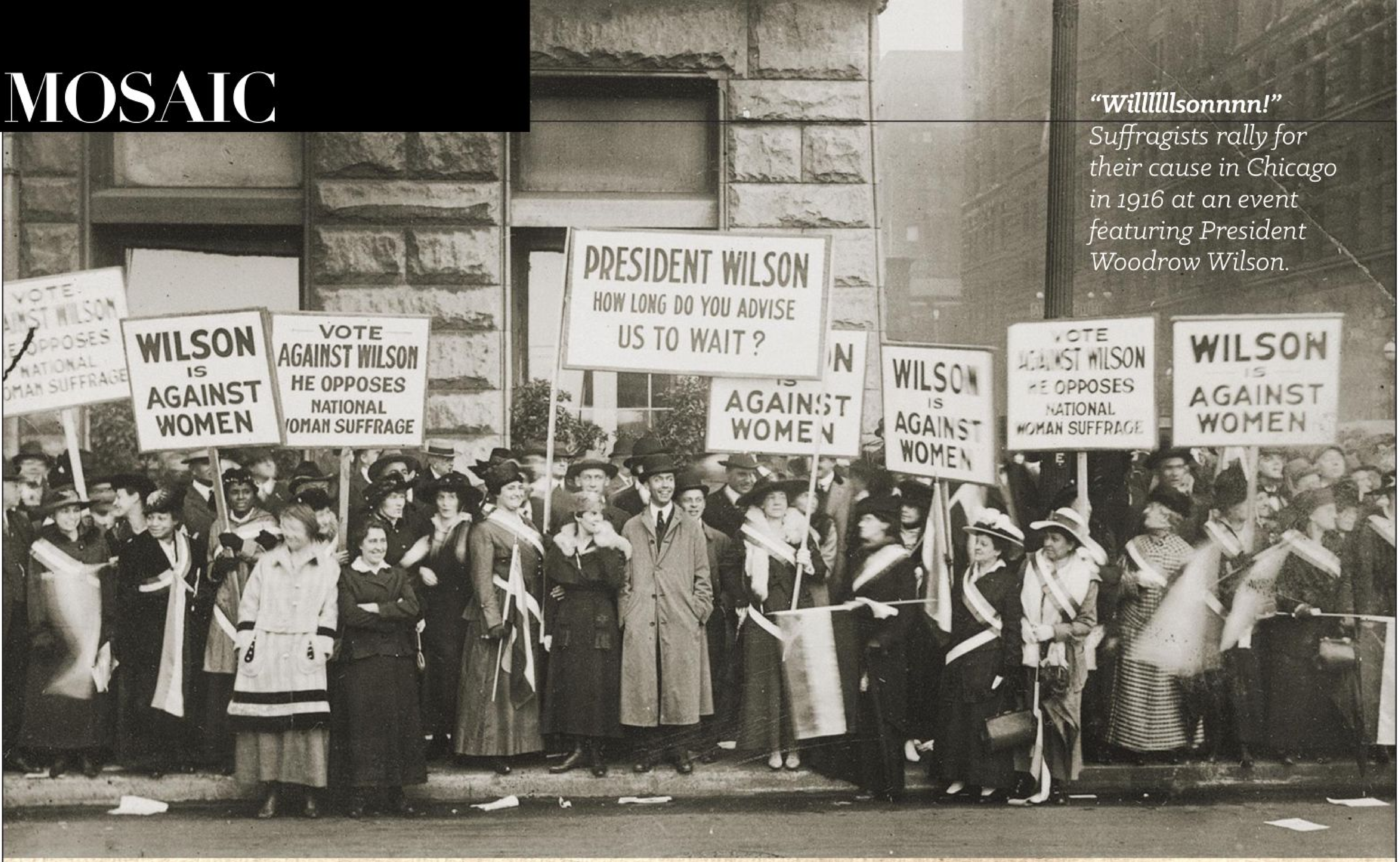
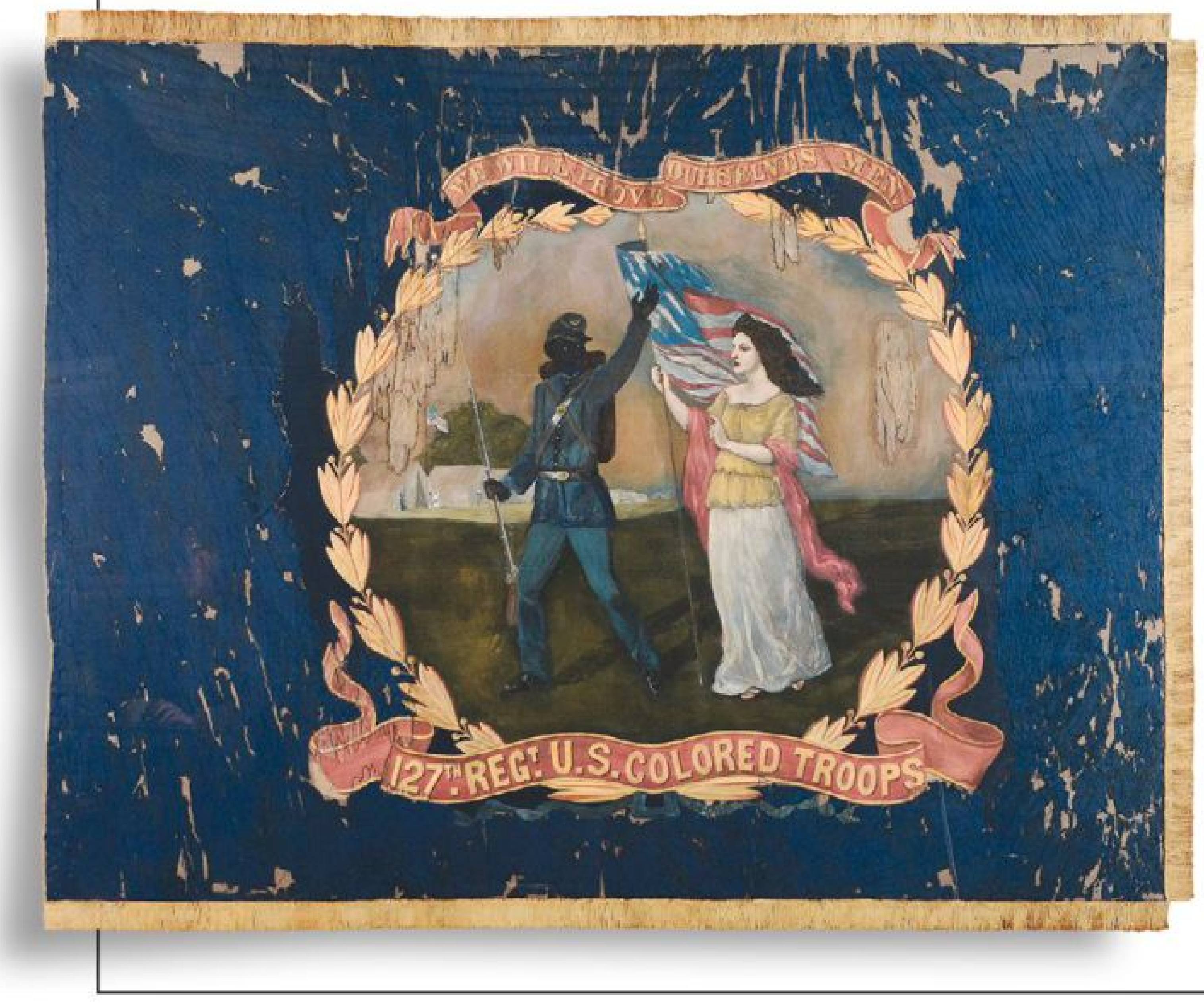

VOTE AGAINST WILSON HE OPPOSES NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE
WILSON IS AGAINST WOMEN
VOTE AGAINST WILSON HE OPPOSES NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE
PRESIDENT WILSON HOW LONG DO YOU ADVISE US TO WAIT?
AGAINST WOMEN
WILSON IS AGAINST WOMEN
VOTE AGAINST WILSON HE OPPOSES NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE
WILSON IS AGAINST WOMEN

"Willlllsonnnn!" *Suffragists rally for their cause in Chicago in 1916 at an event featuring President Woodrow Wilson.*

Long Game

The longest reform movement in American history culminated on August 18, 1920, with ratification of a constitutional amendment granting women the right to vote. Marking a century since Congress passed the 19th Amendment on June 4, 1919, an exhibit at the Library of Congress showcases the battle. Elizabeth Cady Stanton promoted that engagement in the 1848 Declaration of Sentiments: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal…In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object." In ensuing decades, activists pushed for suffrage and other civil rights at the federal and state levels. A major split formed in 1869 over whether women's rights activists should support the 15th Amendment granting suffrage to black men yet not recognizing equal rights for women. A proposal for women's suffrage at the federal level was put forth in the U.S. Senate in 1878 but voted down in 1887. Wyoming broke ground in 1890 as the first state to grant women lasting voting rights. In 1917 the national movement kicked into high gear, using tactics that included petitions, unprecedented protests at the White House, hunger strikes, and attacks on President Woodrow Wilson for waging war for democracy abroad while limiting American women's rights. The exhibit highlights internal tensions in the movement and struggles by women activists of color within a campaign dominated by white middle-class women. Documents, photographs, letters, and diary entries portray the fight, as well as Stanton's bestselling 1895 *The Women's Bible*, which excised the historic portrayal of women as inherently sinful.


WE WILL PROVE OURSELVES MEN
127th REGt. U.S. COLORED TROOPS

Rare USCT Flag Sold

The only extant regimental flag among a group of 11 that U.S. Colored Troops from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, carried in the Civil War was bought by the Atlanta History Center for $196,800 at Morphy Auctions in June 2019. African American artist David Bustill Bowser painted the 11 flags. There were some 150 USCT regiments. John Brown had stayed in Bowser's Philadelphia home, an Underground Railroad stop, in 1858; Bowser painted his portrait. In the 1940s, West Point's museum disposed of all but the banner of the 127th Regiment USCT. Pieced together and restored at the Grand Army of the Republic Museum in Philadelphia, which auctioned it, the banner carries the words: "We will prove ourselves men."

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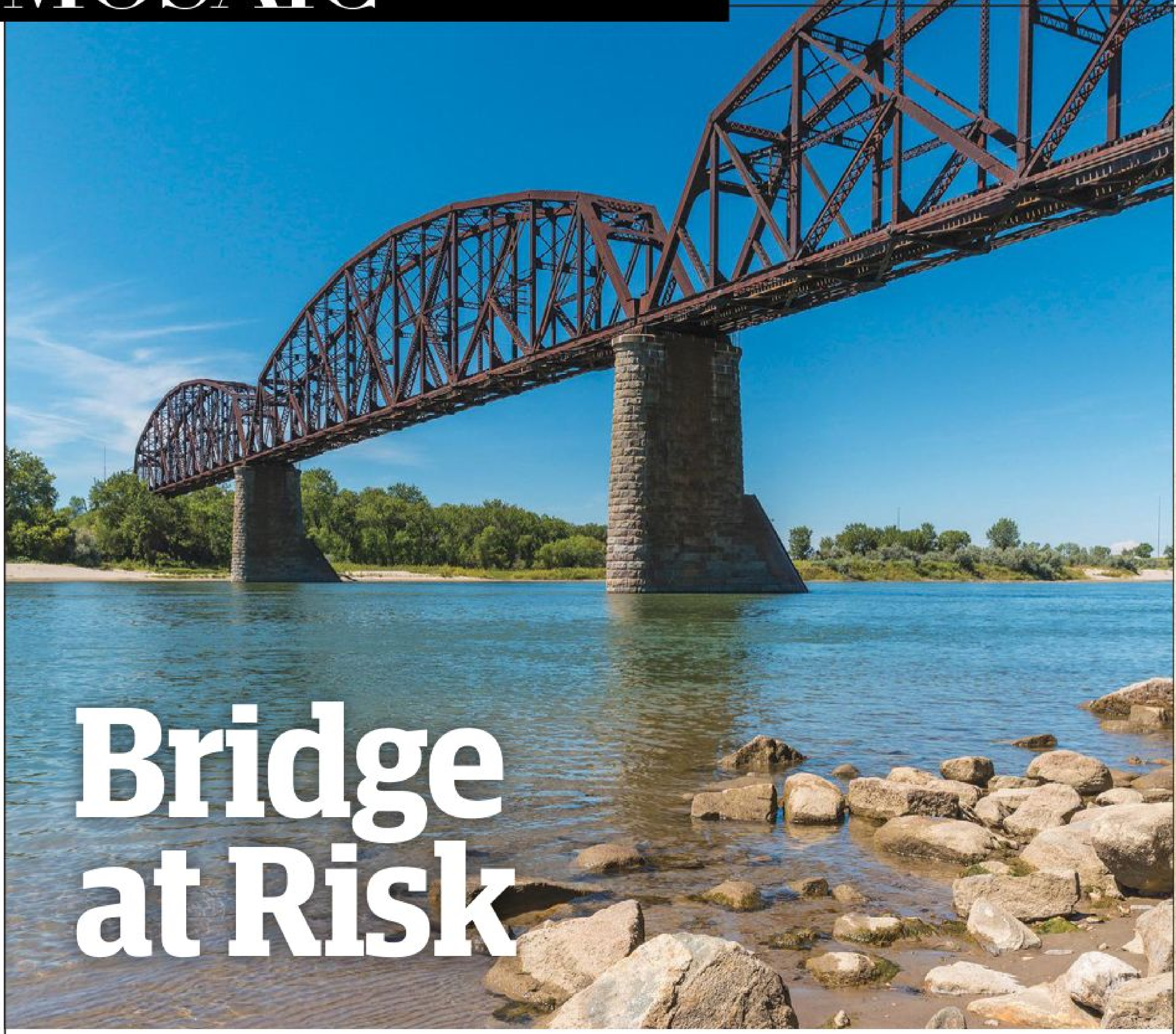
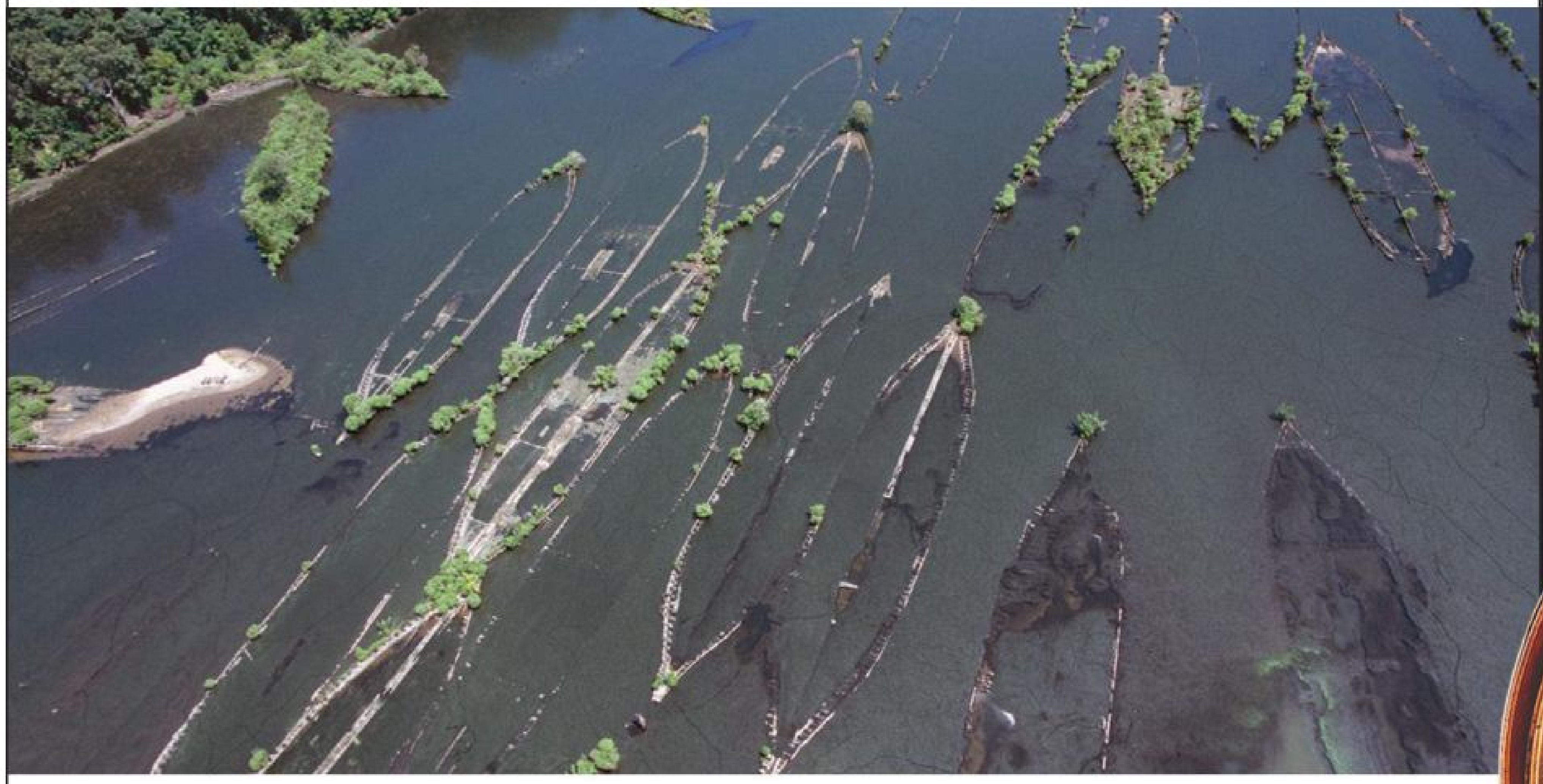


Bridge at Risk

Besides Nashville's Music Row and Washington, DC's Tidal Basin, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's annual list of 11 endangered places includes the Bismarck Mandan Rail Bridge, above. These sites depart from the convention of designating as endangered a single structure. The Bismarck Bridge across the Missouri River, an extraordinary engineering achievement, enabled rails to cross into the West in 1883. Bismarck Bridge is now an International Site of Conscience as a result of the impact that ensuing western development had on indigenous peoples. Owner BNSF Railroad has slated the span for demolition. The Trust is petitioning to keep the bridge intact.



Ghost Fleet's Preserve

Mallows Bay, on the Potomac River south of Washington, DC, will be designated as a marine sanctuary. Mallows Bay is home to countless birds that nest in and around the hulks of more than 100 wooden merchant ships abandoned in the river in the wake of World War I. The 18-square-mile preserve joins the Florida Keys, Monterey Bay and the Channel Islands in California, the site of the USS *Monitor*-CSS *Virginia* battle at Hampton Roads, and other officially designated sanctuaries.

Weeksville Reprieve

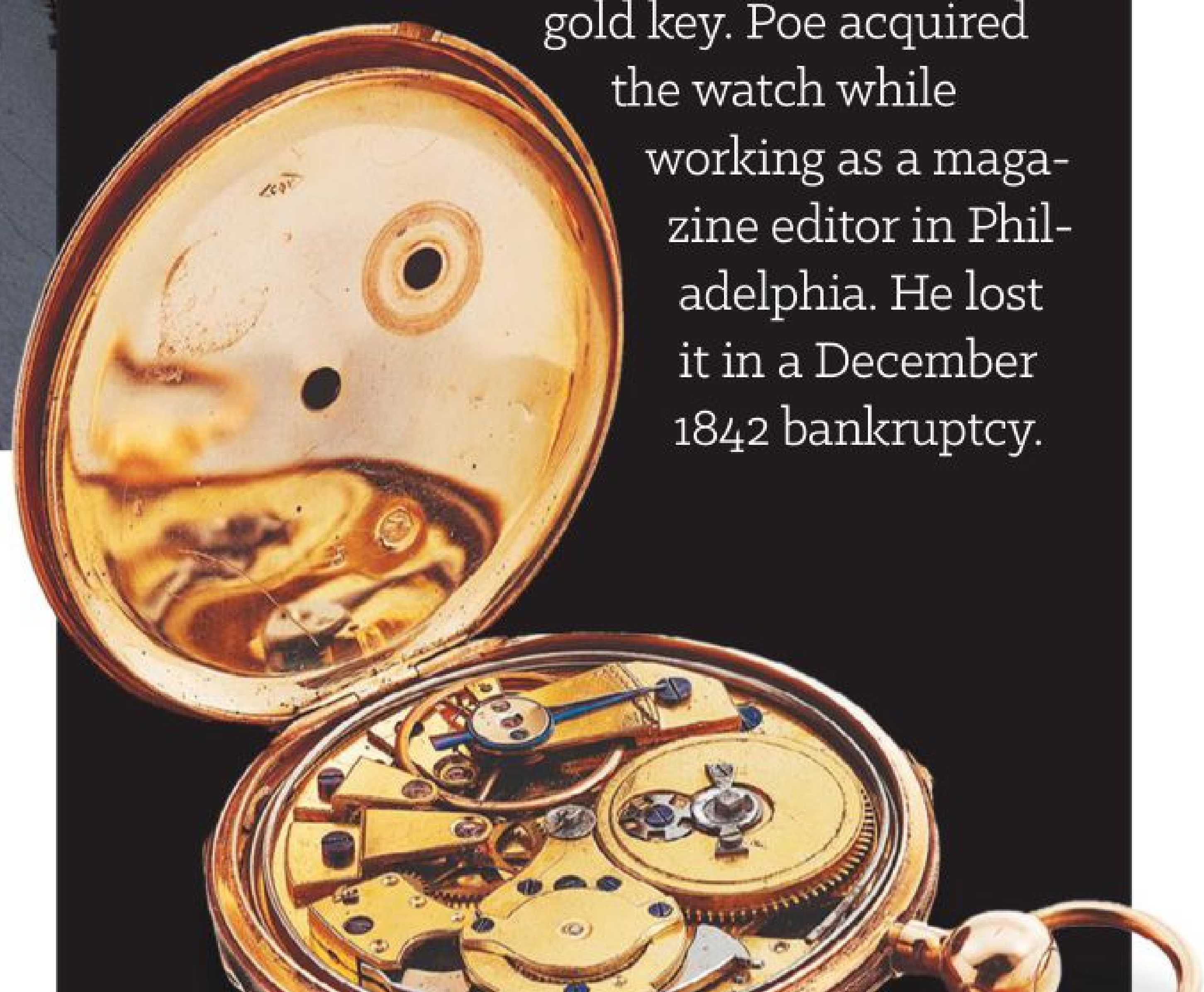
Vigorous fundraising has revived hopes for the Weeksville Heritage Center, a historic house museum in Brooklyn, New York. The facility celebrates a neighborhood that free blacks founded in 1838; New York State abolished slavery in 1827. The museum, created in 1969, said this year it was too broke to go on. An online campaign raised $265,000, stabilizing its finances through September.

The center maintains four historic houses on Hunterfly Road, built 1840-80. James Weeks, a former slave from Virginia, laid out the community, which became a hub of black businesses. During anti-black riots in Manhattan over the Union draft in 1863, Weeksville was a refuge for African Americans. For more: weeksvillesociety.org

TOP BID

Time on His Side

There was no pendulum nor cask of Amontillado in a batch of Edgar Allan Poe's personal items at a recent Christie's auction but there was an 18-carat pocket watch that sold June 12 for **$250,000**, well over the $120,000 estimated sale price. The 1840 timepiece is wound with a gold key. Poe acquired the watch while working as a magazine editor in Philadelphia. He lost it in a December 1842 bankruptcy.



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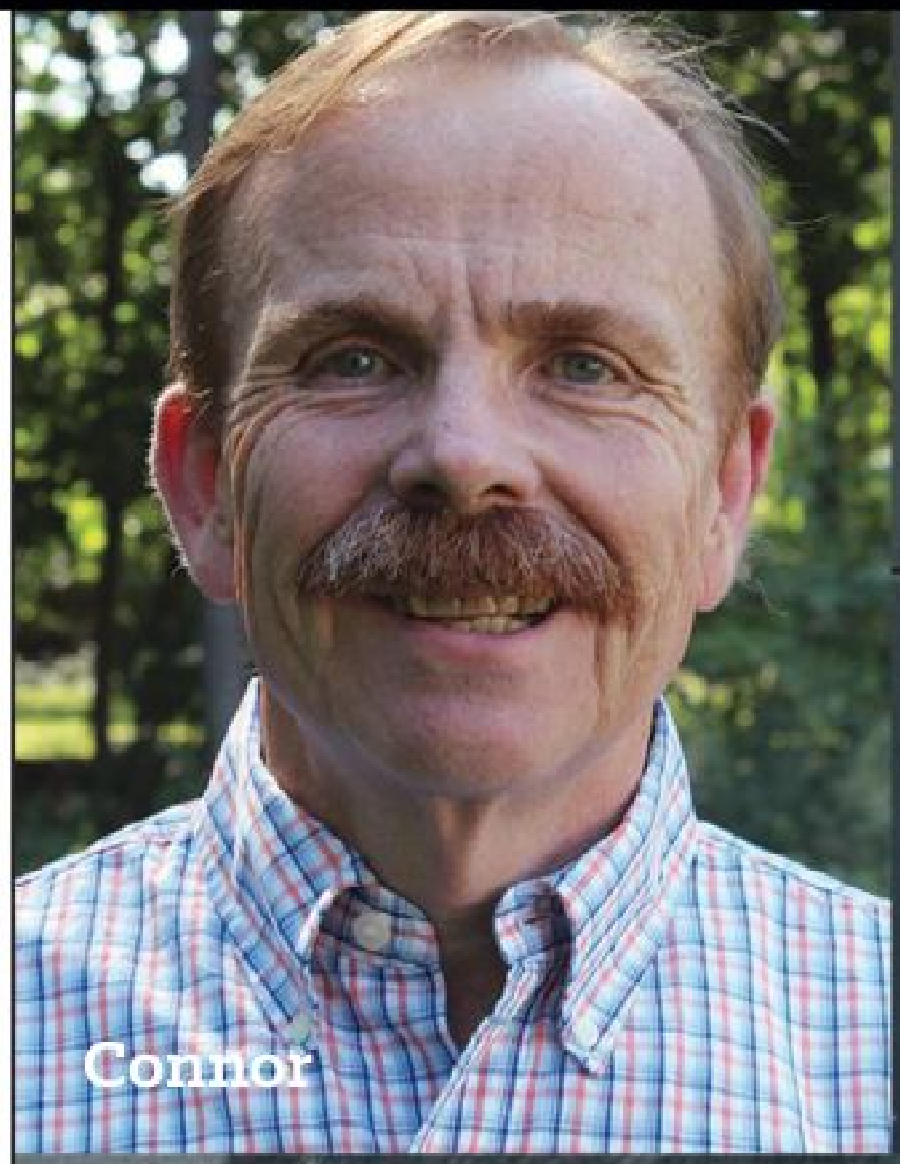
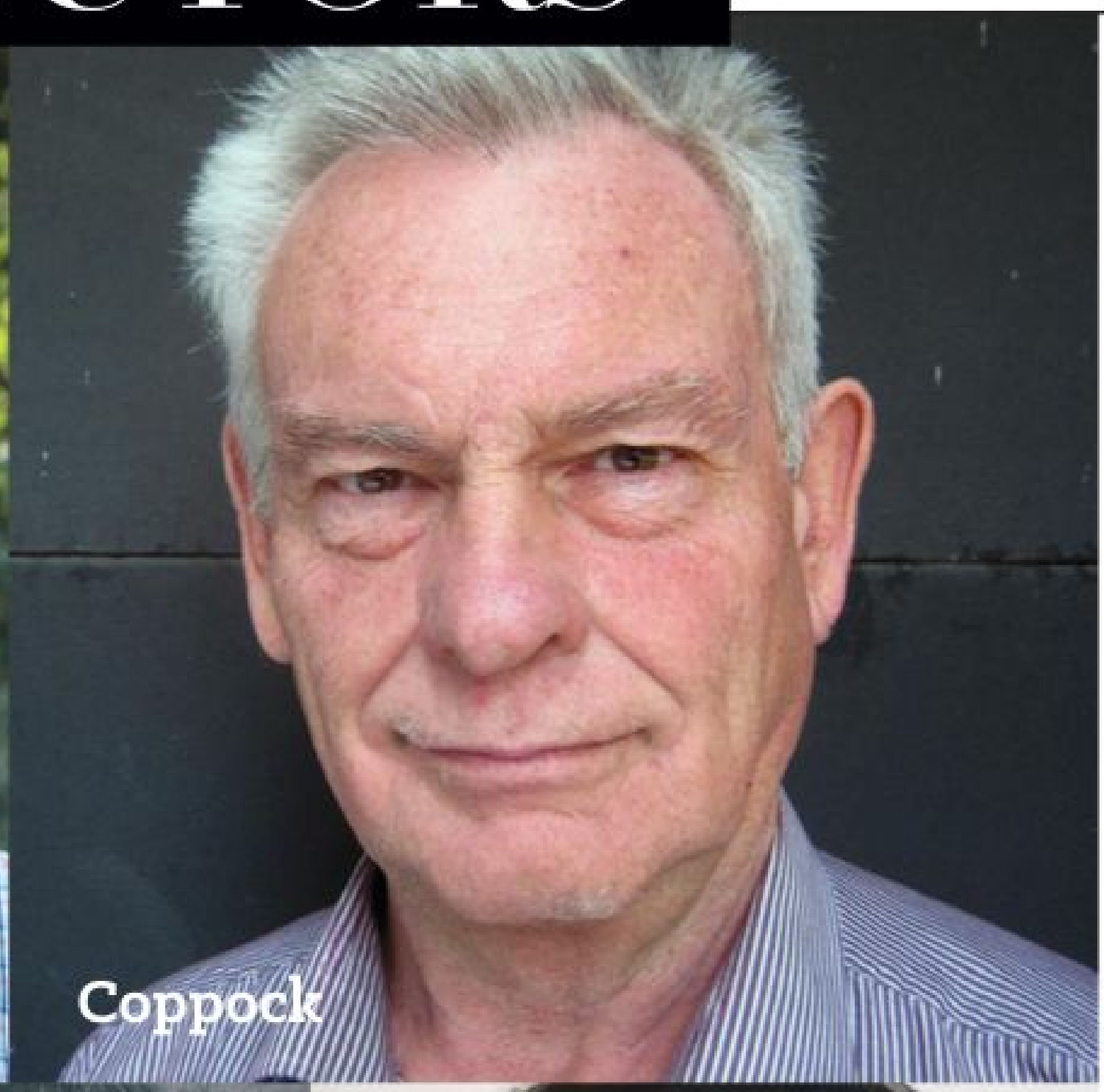

Connor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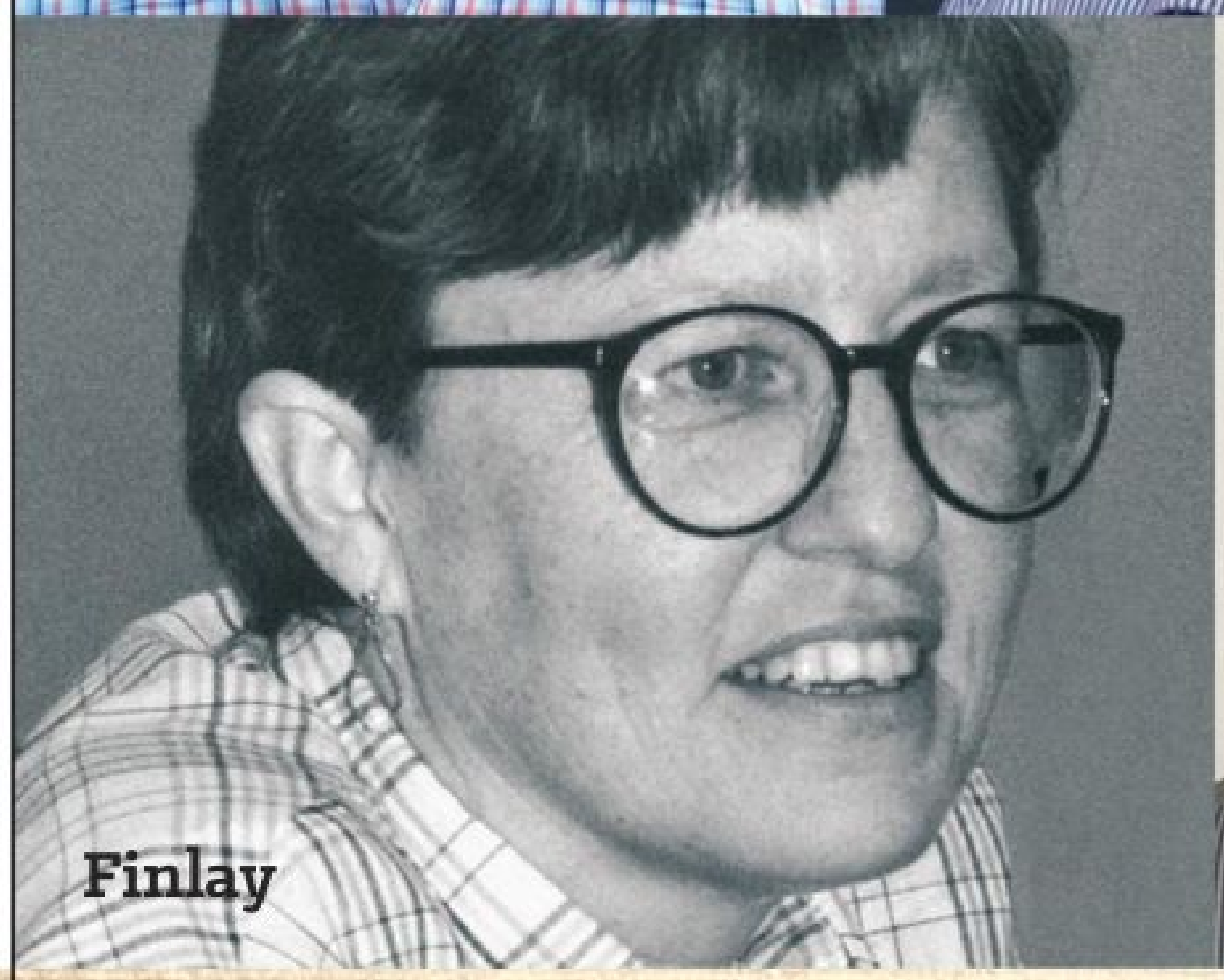
Finlay

Geberer

Joseph Connor ("Give 'Em Healthcare, Harry," p. 40) is a former prosecutor who lives in New Jersey. His most recent article was "Born in the USA" (June 2019).

Mike Coppock ("The Weight of Gold," p. 32) is a seasonal historic interpreter at Denali National Park in Alaska, where from May to October he informs visitors about the history and activities of winter dogsled patrols that discourage poaching and supply facilities around the park.

Barbara Finlay ("Shell Game," p. 56), professor emerita at Texas A&M University, wrote "The Best Kind of Cultural Collision" (August 2018). "Ya Basta!", a 1991 paper by the late activist Texas attorney Emily Jones, inspired Finlay to research and write "Shell Game."

Raanan Geberer ("Off the Rails," p. 48), a writer based in New York City, most recently wrote "Yanks in the IDF" (February 2019).

Letters

Common Knowledge

"Little Ice Age Linked to Die-Off in the Americas" (June 2019) explains the abbreviation "CE" as meaning "Christian Era," ignoring the term's other meaning, "Common Era." Replacement with BCE ("Before the Common Era") and CE of BC and AD are an attempt to get away from the Christianization of dating events.

Toby Kurtz
Spicewood, Texas

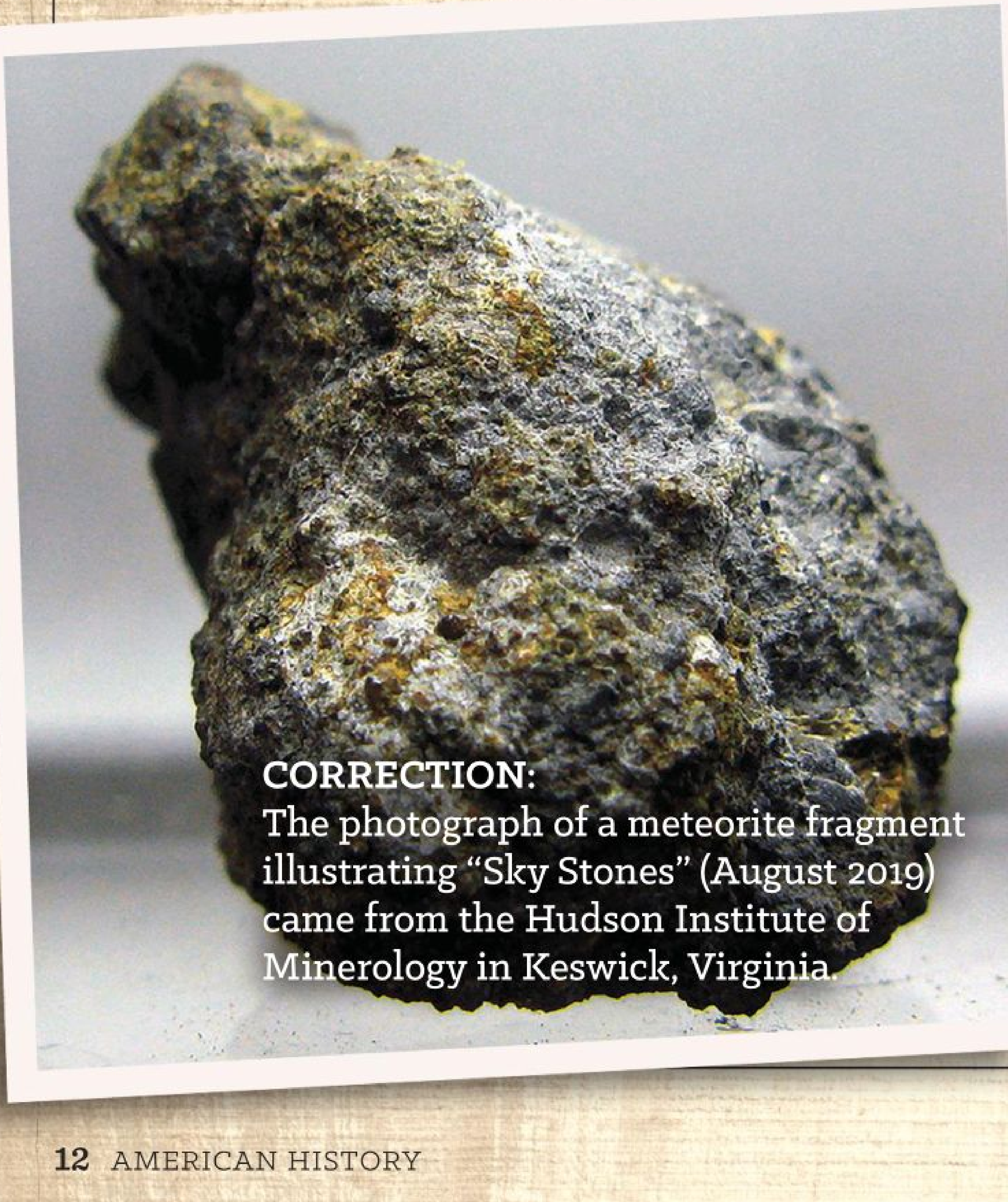
CORRECTION:
The photograph of a meteorite fragment illustrating "Sky Stones" (August 2019) came from the Hudson Institute of Minerology in Keswick, Virginia.

PHOTO BY PETER CRISTOFONO/COURTESY OF HUDSON INSTITUTE OF METEROLOGY

Immigrant Song

Jus soli, the law of the soil ("Born in the USA," June 2019), is not unusual; in the Western hemisphere it predominates. Among crimes the Declaration of Independence attributed to Great Britain's king were "obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners" and "refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither." The author cites as a source the Center for Immigration Studies, which the Southern Poverty Law Center identifies as a hate group whose statements "have been widely criticized and debunked by groups such as the Immigration Policy Center and the CATO Institute."

Joseph Drew
Washington, D.C.

Stone Cold Wrong

Thomas Jefferson would be surprised by the assertion in "Sky Stone" (August 2019) that his re-election in 1804 was a squeaker. Rewarding him for his first term—he had cut taxes, kept the peace, and bought Louisiana—a grateful nation gave Jefferson 162 of 176 electoral votes, from 15 of 17 states. Opponent Charles Pinckney won only the Federalist ghettos of Connecticut and Delaware, plus two of Maryland's 11 votes. Jefferson's second term would be hellacious, but that is another story.

Richard Brookhiser
New York, New York

EDITOR'S NOTE: *For her December 2018 article "The Great War in the Big Woods," the Army Historical Foundation has awarded regular contributor Jessica Wambach Brown its 2018 Journal and Magazine Distinguished Writing Award.*

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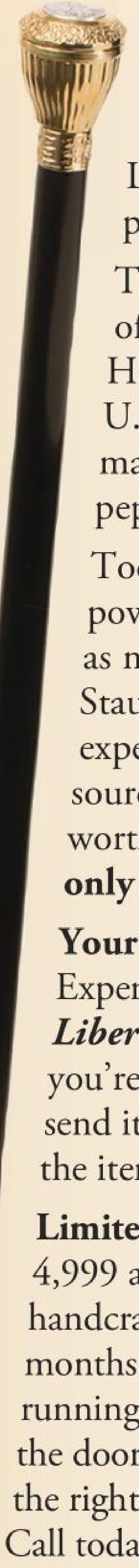

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In Akron, Ohio, in 1942 workers at a Goodrich plant examine a run of synthetic rubber.

ECHOES OF EMPIRE

BY RICHARD ERNSBERGER JR.

Neo-Colonialism?
Immerwahr sees the American empire taking the form of a "pointillist" array that juxtaposes a few geographically large territories alongside hundreds of smaller enclaves such as military bases.

Daniel Immerwahr, associate professor of history at Northwestern University, is author of *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019). His first book, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development*, won the Organization of American Historians' Merle Curti Award.

You assert that the United States has a long unacknowledged history of empire. Often, when we talk about "American empire," we talk about imperialism, from Manifest Destiny to military interventions in the Middle East. When I say the history of the United States is one of empire, I'm referring not to imperialism but to territory, not to the character of the country but to its shape. Ever since gaining independence from Britain, the United States has contained not only states but territories. These aren't small; by 1940, one person in eight living in the United States resided in the territories, and the country contained more colonial subjects than African Americans or immigrants. Yet the territories, particularly those overseas, haven't always been easy for historians studying the United States to see.

What accounts for this lack of awareness? I grew up on the American mainland, and at no point in my education do I remember even seeing a map of the United States that had Puerto Rico on it, though Puerto Rico has been part of the United States for 120 years. The same is true of the census, whose statistical calculations—how long people live, how many people live in cities, and so forth—largely have included only the mainland and states, not overseas territories. The larger issue is surely this: There has been a longstanding, racially informed sense on the mainland that certain parts of the United States "count" while other parts don't, that certain parts of the country are truly "America," whereas others are merely possessions.

Seventh graders at Western Michigan Training School caught onto this in 1941. After Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt enjoined

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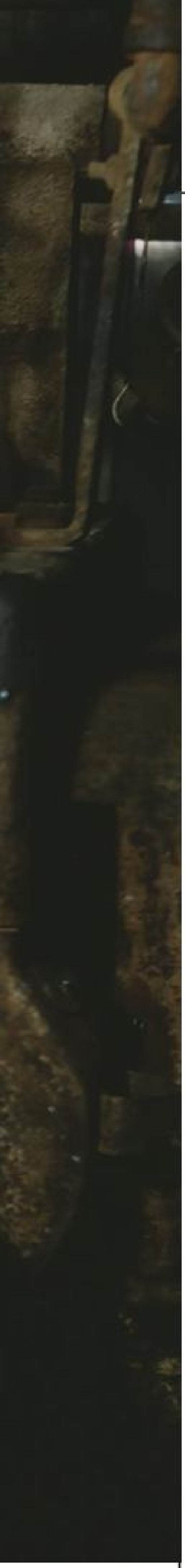

Americans to follow the war on maps. Seventh-grade girls in Kalamazoo tried that, using a Rand McNally war atlas. The atlas listed Hawai‘i as a foreign country, along with Puerto Rico and Alaska. Wondering how an attack on “foreign” Hawai‘i could have led the United States into war, the students asked Rand McNally what kept Hawai‘i from being part of America. The publisher replied that because Hawai‘i is “foreign to our continental shores,” it couldn’t be shown as part of the United States. This small example shows the persistence of the assumption that some parts of the United States are really part of the country, while others aren’t.

How did the United States justify annexing the Philippines after the Spanish-American war? President William McKinley said the United States had an obligation to civilize the Filipinos. More broadly, the Philippines annexation was part of a forthright turn by America’s leadership away from what had been the prevailing pattern among imperial nations of settler colonialism and toward the ruling of large, distant populations. We don’t normally think of the United States as a colonial power in that sense, but by the 1920s the country had the world’s fifth-largest empire by population—some 19 million colonial subjects.

Many white Americans in the Lower 48 weren’t keen to acquire Alaska, Hawai‘i, and other territories home to nonwhites. Racism comes in flavors. There’s the racism that proposes that whites rule nonwhites. Another kind insists that white people have as little to do with nonwhites as possible. In the United States of the 19th century, you can see these variations fighting with each other. Much resistance to colonial empire comes not from sympathy with the colonized but from the desire to preserve the whiteness of the United States.

Colonial Sacrifice
Filipino soldiers lined up for U.S. officers in 1941. America abandoned them to Japan.

After 1945, America did something very unusual. The historical pattern had been: When you get more power, you get more territory. At the end of World War II, the United States ruled a larger population in colonies and occupied territories than on the mainland. But instead of going on an imperial spree, the country sought to distance itself from the colonial model by ending its occupations, letting go of its largest colony, the Philippines, and making states of Hawai‘i and Alaska. Instead of becoming a world-girdling colonial empire, the United States became what I call a “pointillist empire.” The United States continues to hold colonies—millions live in them today—but its main interest seems to be small enclaves, such as hundreds of foreign military bases, that dot the globe.

How did science influence America’s shift to decolonization? Historically, great powers have sought large colonies for access to strategic resources. In the industrial world, that has meant rubber, palm oil, tin, gutta-percha, and the like. But now colonization is not the only way to get those resources. You can get them through chemistry. In the 1940s, to a remarkable extent, the United States developed substitutes for key raw materials. When Japan cut off America’s supply of natural rubber, American scientists learned to synthesize rubber from petroleum, substitute nylon for hemp and silk, and swap chloroquine for quinine. After the war, able to substitute technology for territory, the United States didn’t need large colonies as much.

Describe America’s attitude toward its overseas charges. In 1913, Woodrow Wilson described those territories as “outside the charmed circle of our own national life.” People in the territories can’t vote for president. They have no meaningful representation in Congress. The Constitution doesn’t apply to them. Exclusion from all three branches of government has had serious consequences. In wartime, territories have tended to be sacrifice zones—in my book, I tell how during World War II the Philippines became a bloodlands. In peacetime, doctors, lawyers, and other experts have been drawn to the territories as laboratories, where ideas can be tested with relatively little oversight.

America’s empire endures. How? That empire endures in American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands and their 3 to 4 million inhabitants, and in foreign military bases; a recent count put them at 800. The consequences of empire are palpable. In the 1940s, Rand McNally doubted whether Hawai‘i was truly “American.” More recently, Barack Obama, whose father was from Kenya and who was born and raised in Hawai‘i and elsewhere in the Pacific, was the target of rumors about whether *he* was “American.” If you look at the origins of birtherism—Donald Trump’s entry ticket into presidential politics—it’s clear that it was triggered by Obama’s Pacific birth and upbringing, not just his being black. ★

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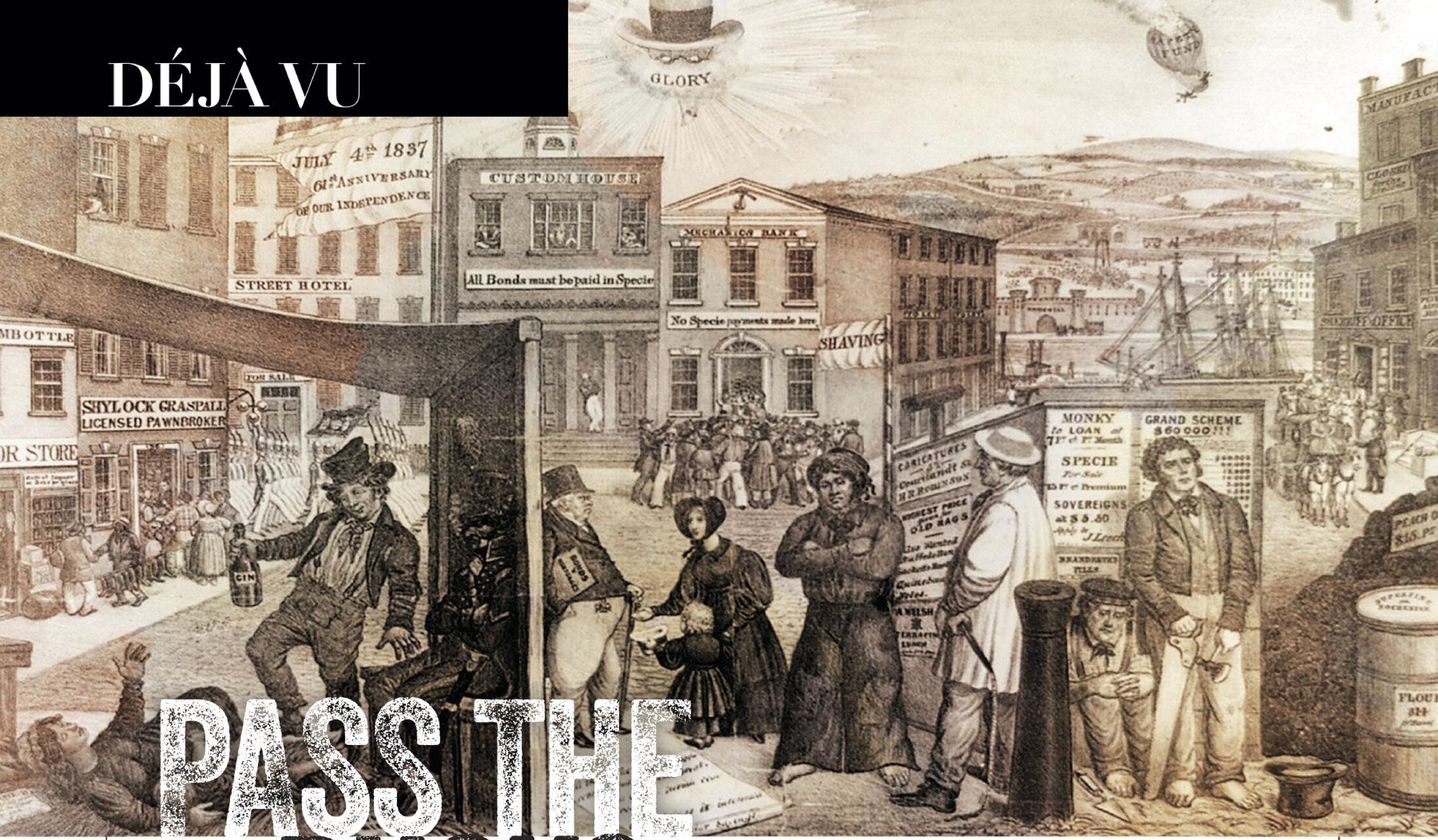

PASS THE BUCKS

BY RICHARD BROOKHISER

Troubled Times
The Panic of 1837 was especially unsettling for New Yorkers.

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Americans want presidents who are leaders—that is, special—but we also want presidents who are like us: apotheoses of averageness. So every presidential campaign sees a round of passing the bucks, with wealthy candidates explaining away their good fortune—in both senses of the word—while rivals blazon it. Sometimes hijinks ensue.

Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont), the socialist who runs as a Democrat, turned out to be a millionaire. Critics pounced. "I wrote a best-selling book," he snapped. "If you write a best-selling book, you can be a millionaire too." Democratic front-runner Joe Biden labels himself "Middle Class Joe." Yet he too belongs to the millionaire's club, thanks in part to a multi-book deal. Sniffs Adam Green of the Progressive Campaign Committee: "Joe Biden is the opposite of someone who will challenge big corporate and moneyed elites." But Green's candidate, Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Massachusetts), is, yes, another millionaire, thanks to her own best seller. (First novelists toiling in Brooklyn walk-ups ask, "When do I cash in?") Though President Donald Trump would seem exempt from poor-mouthing, even he wants to be self-made, claiming he scored one scant loan from tycoon father Fred, duly repaid. Then a *New York Times* expose showed how, over many years, Trump *père* funneled multiple millions to his high-rolling son.

The gaudiest attack on a candidate's wealth—detailed, vicious, hilarious—was the first. Its target: Martin Van Buren. The eighth president truly could have called himself Middle Class Martin. The great Virginians all had been to the manor born. Years of lawyering and diplomacy had made farmer's son John Adams prosperous and cosmopolitan—qualities he passed on to son and fellow president John Quincy. Hardscrabble Andrew Jackson had struck it rich upon moving to the Mississippi Valley, then the American west. Van Buren, by contrast, grew up in Kinderhook, a Hudson Valley town whose inhabitants spoke Dutch; he's the only president whose first language was not English.

Father Abraham was a tavernkeeper who, in Martin's words, lacked "the spirit of accumulation." To earn his keep, the youth had to leave school at 13. One of his first jobs was dogsbody at a law office. When young Van Buren came to work in clothes spun at home by his mother, his boss lectured him on proper appearance. The boy took two days off. When he returned, he was wearing the same outfit as his employer. Ever after, Van Buren dressed at or above his station. When he graduated from law to politics, he stumped New York in snuff-colored coat, orange cravat, pearl vest and hose, yellow kid gloves, and white trousers—unconsciously setting himself up for a world of hurt.

Van Buren the pol might have been dressing rich, but he was sticking

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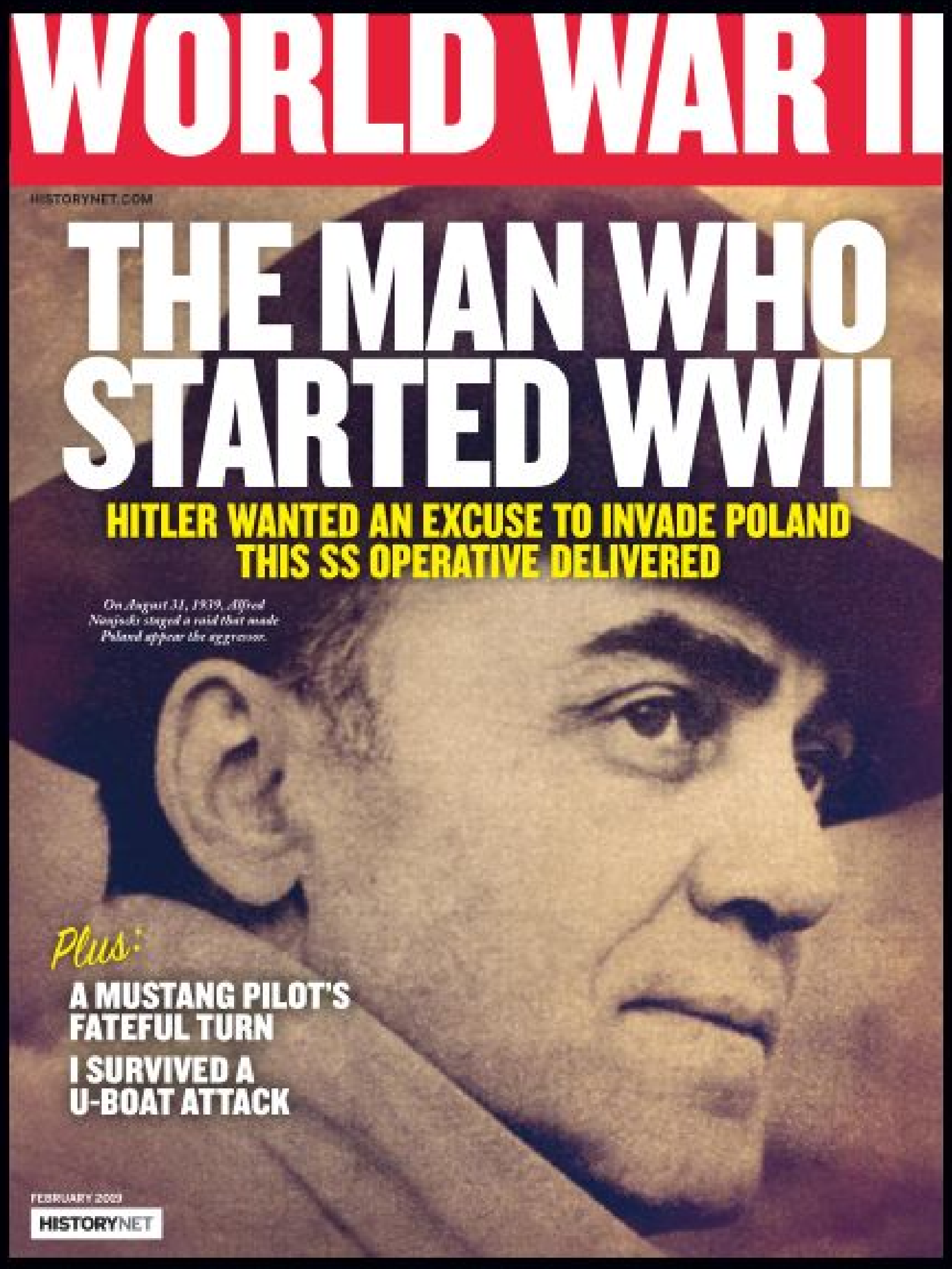
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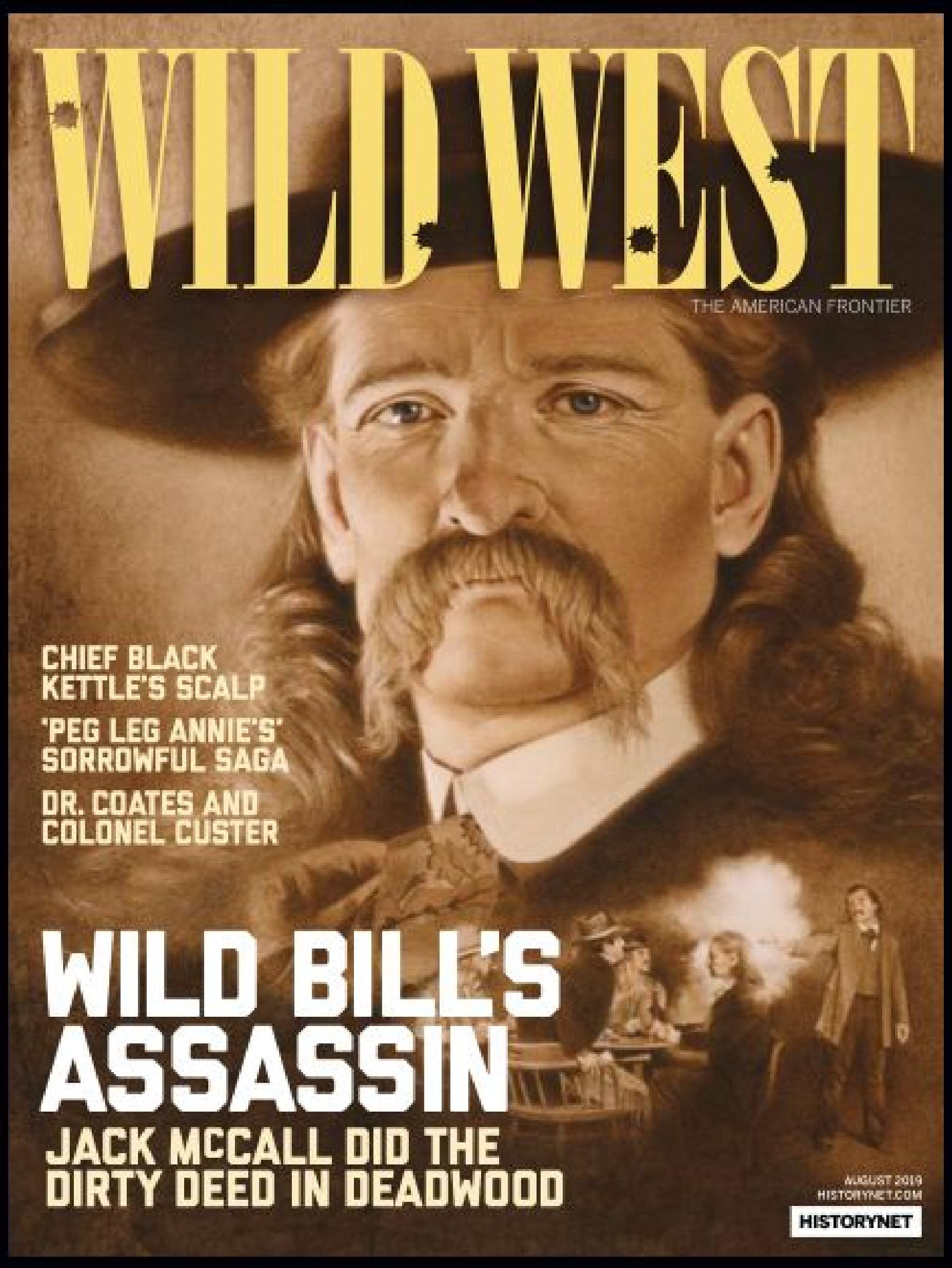
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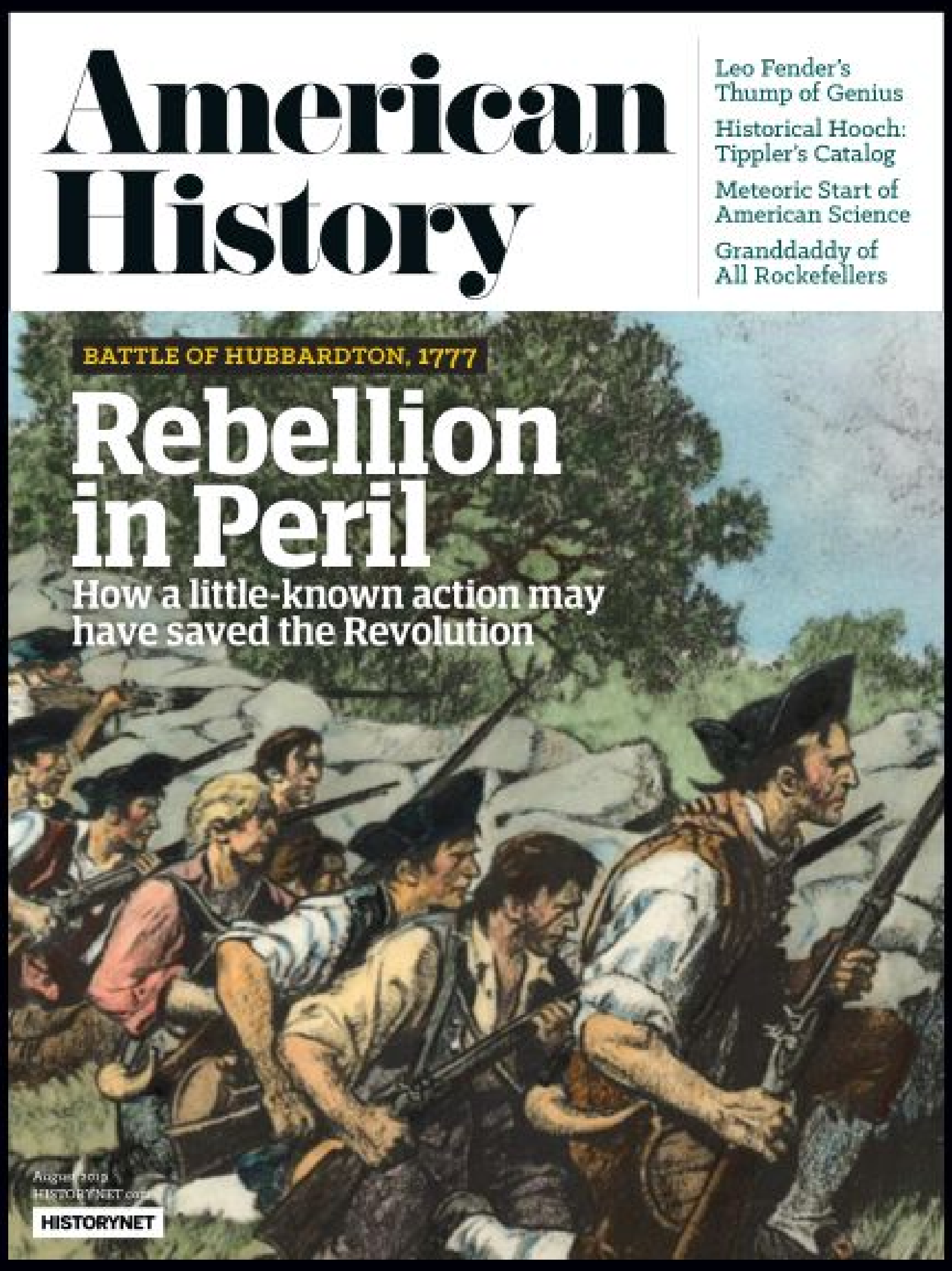
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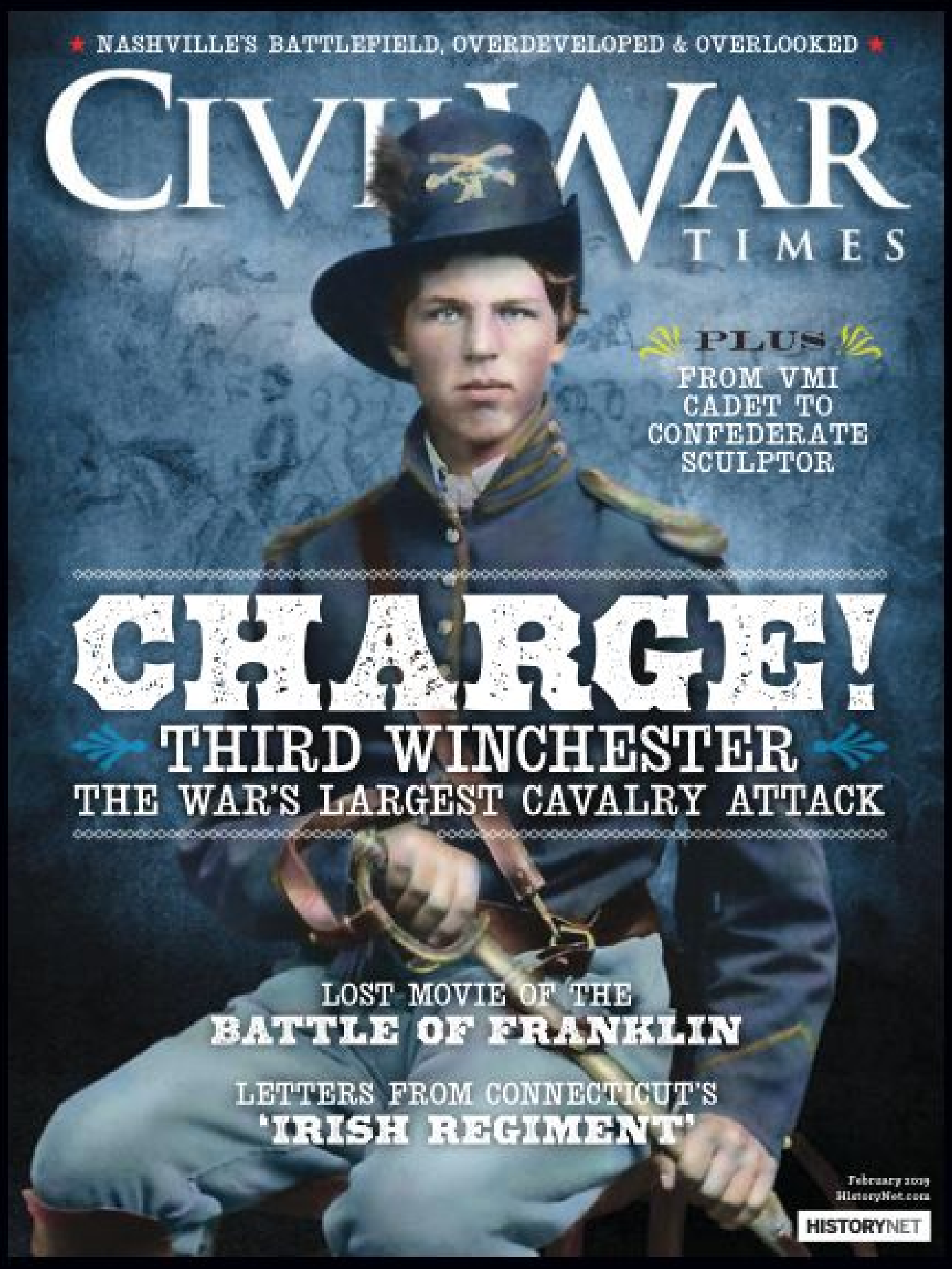
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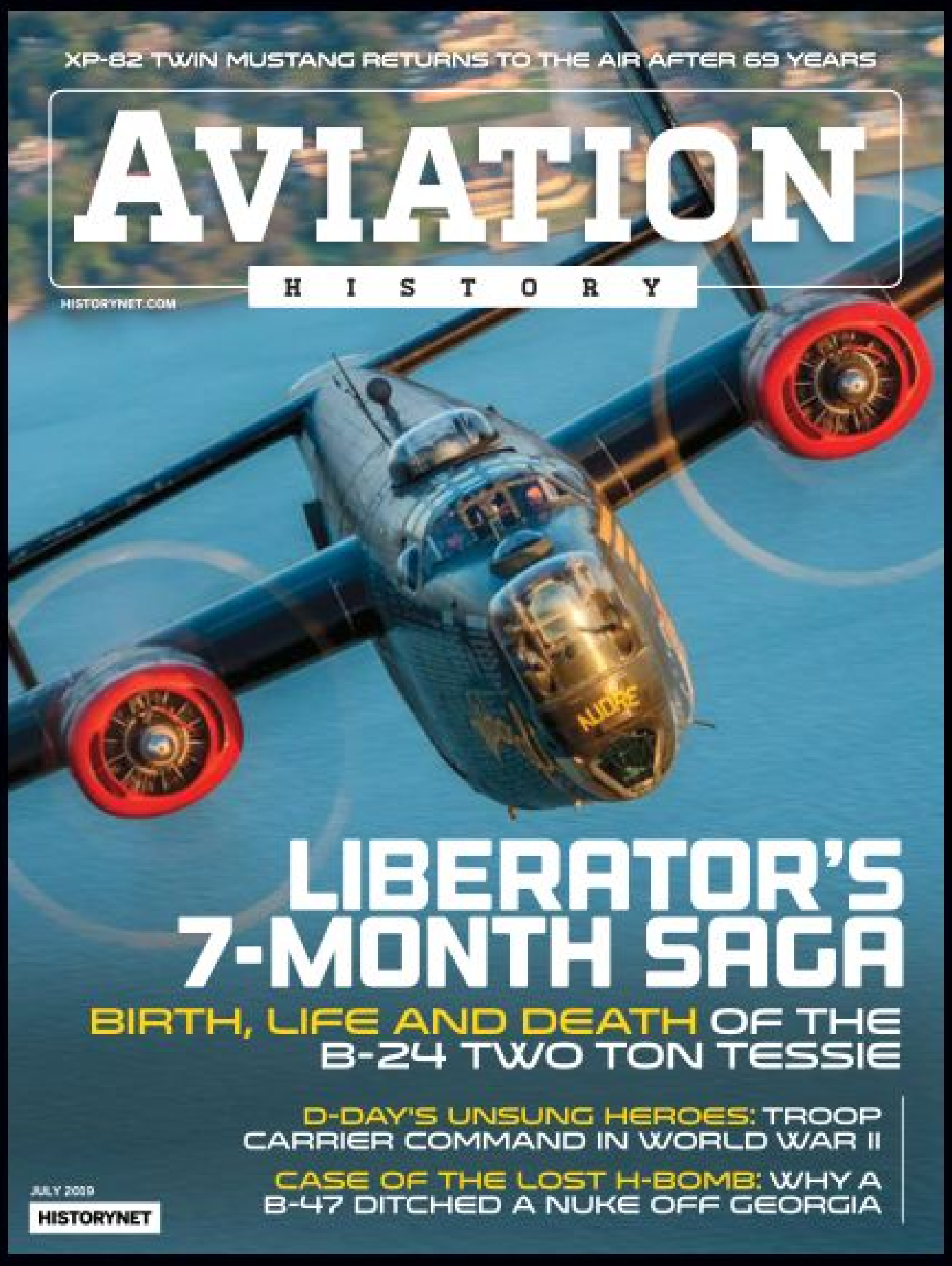
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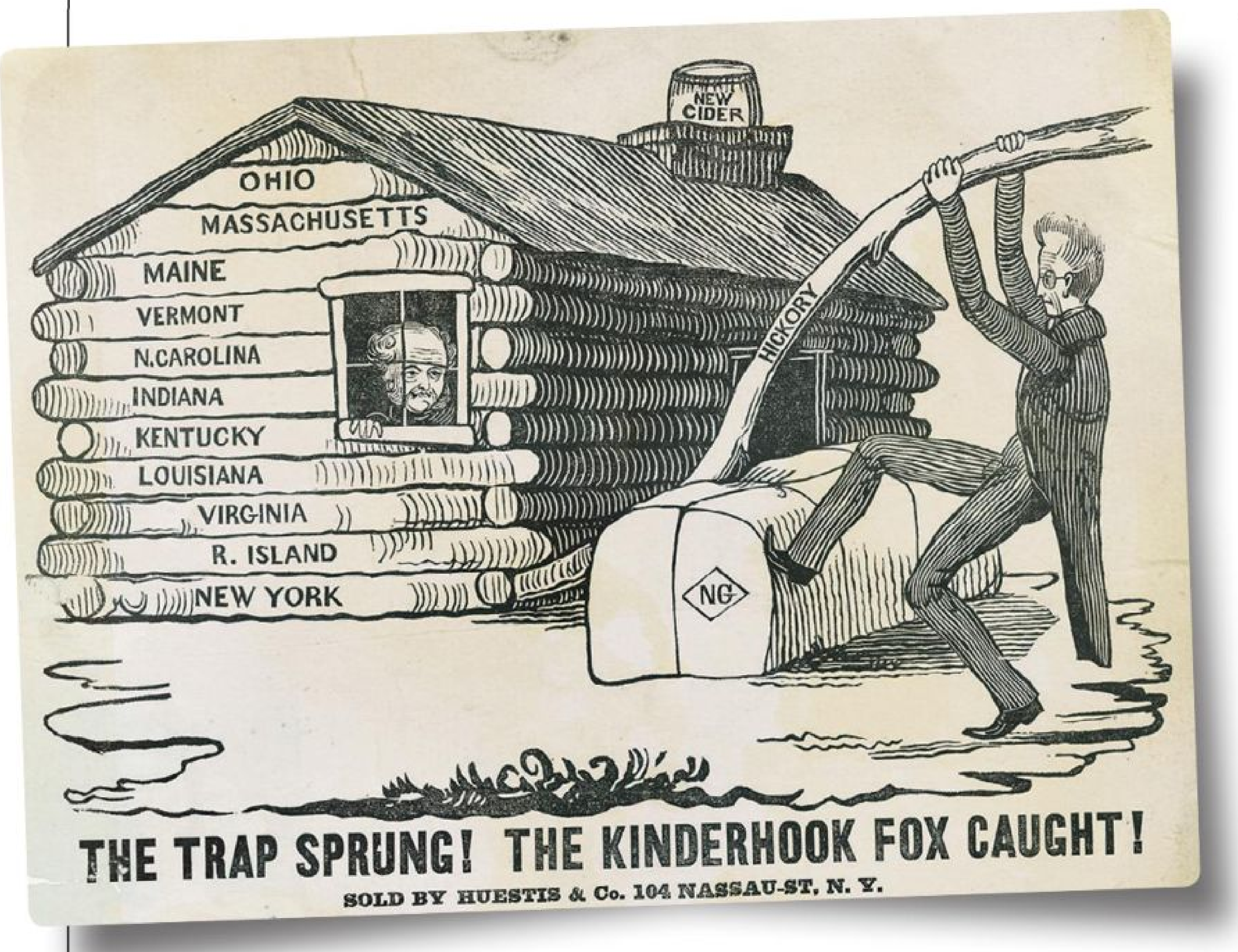
up for New York’s common folks, who thanks to numbers—the state was the nation’s most populous by 1810—were a political bloc worth courting. As their champion and tribune, Van Buren became a power broker in the new Democratic Party. Andrew Jackson made him a protégé, first as secretary of state, then vice president. In 1836 the dapper New Yorker followed Old Hickory into the White House.

The Panic of 1837 blighted Van Buren’s term out of the gate. Banks failed. Urban mobs rioted for flour. Conditions slowly improved, but when the time came for Van Buren to stand for re-election he had two factors working hard against him.



His Party’s Petard
Van Buren paid a punitively high price for his tastes in clothing and White House furnishings.

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

One was his opponent, William Henry Harrison. An Indian fighter and occasional territorial governor, Harrison had a résumé that allowed his supporters to depict the candidate as a frontiersman, living in a log cabin and drinking hard cider, when in fact their man’s dad had been a Virginia planter and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The other hazard in Van Buren’s path was a vintage Democratic Party ploy. Andrew Jackson had campaigned against John Quincy Adams for extravagance, dilating on the fact that JQA installed a billiard table at the White House. Van Buren was in line for karmic payback.

On April 14, 1840, Representative Charles Ogle (W-Pennsylvania) rose in the House to object to an appropriation for “alterations and repairs to the President’s house and furniture.” A symphony of vituperation followed. Ogle’s speech, which took three days to deliver, began with a survey of the White House grounds. The Pennsylvanian mixed facts, presented in the worst possible light, with grotesque hypotheticals. Ogle ticked off all the flowers in the White House garden, relishing the exotically named blooms: enchanter’s night-shade, adder’s tongue, lizard’s tail, false foxglove (one of Van Buren’s nicknames was the Fox of Kinderhook). Ogle then alleged that Van Buren planned to gussy up the grounds with temples, pavilions, lakes, fountains, and “two or three hundred pieces” of *Italian statuary*. Out of a factual survey of expenses for maintaining the White House lawn Ogle spun this fantasy: that Van Buren had “constructed a number of clever-sized hills, every pair of which, it is said, was designed to resemble and assume the form of AN AMAZON’s BOSOM, with a miniature knoll or hillock on its apex, to denote the nipple.”

Conducting his imaginary tour into what he called the “presidential palace,” Ogle visited each public room, detailing carpets, chairs, mirrors, and mantelpieces. The climax was Van Buren’s dinner table, set with gilt dessert china and sterling silver plate purchased from a *Russian* diplomat. “It is time,” the fabulist intoned, “the people of the United States should know that their money goes to buy for their plain, hard-handed democratic president, knives, forks and spoons of gold that he may dine in the style of the monarchs of Europe.” Worse yet, Van Buren dared own *tinted glass finger cups*. “What, sir, will the honest [Democrat] say to Mr. Van Buren for spending the People’s cash on FOREIGN…GREEN FINGER CUPS, in which to wash his pretty, tapering, soft, white, lily fingers, after dining on *fricandeau de veau* and *omelette soufflé*?”

Wherever possible Ogle invoked log cabins and hard cider, and the fuss the Democrats had raised over John Quincy Adams and his billiard table. “Who does not remember the indignant bursts of eloquence that were then launched forth within this Hall against gambling, waste of time, neglect of public business [and] extravagance?” Ogle beat his theme like a gong: Democrats once pretended to be simple folk; Harrison actually was; Martin Van Buren stupendously wasn’t.

Ogle published his speech far and wide. The average voter could not untangle his minutely accurate reportage on the actual White House from his lost-in-the-cosmos imaginings of how Van Buren longed to transmogrify it. However, the average voter did know that Van Buren dressed like a dude. So the muck stuck. That autumn log cabin beat green finger cups 234 electoral votes to 60. Harrison succumbed to enteric fever in April 1841, a month after his inauguration. Charles Ogle succumbed to tuberculosis that May. Van Buren marched on until 1862; *omelette soufflé* evidently agreed with him.

Class kabuki has breathed the longest, unto the present day, and no doubt will live as long as democracy itself. Van Buren biographer Ted Widmer laments that class warfare is dishonestly waged, as against Van Buren, by “the party of privilege.” One remedy for false class warfare might be not to practice class warfare in the first place.

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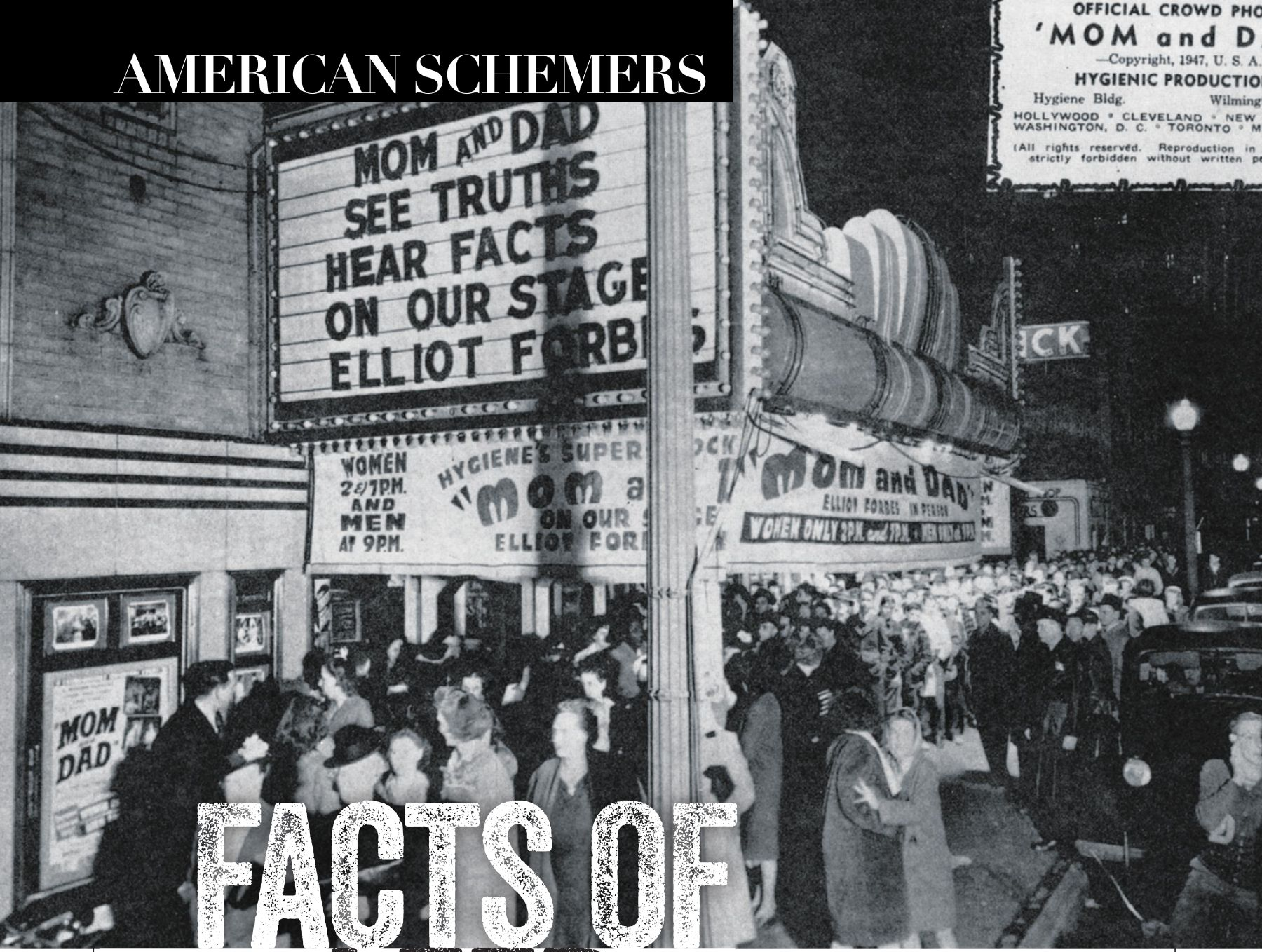
AMERICAN SCHEMERS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HYGIENIC PRODUCTIO
Hygiene Bldg. Wilming
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MOM AND DAD
SEE TRUTHS
HEAR FACTS
ON OUR STAGE
ELLIOT FORBES
WOMEN 2 & 7 P.M. AND MEN AT 9 P.M.
HYGIENE'S SUPER
"MOM a
ON OUR
ELLIOT FOR
Mom and Dad
ELLIOT FORBES IN PERSON
WOMEN ONLY 2 P.M. and 7 P.M.
MOM AND DAD

FACTS OF LEER

BY PETER CARLSON

Smirky Science *For Babb, nothing sold like sensationalism posing as education, preferably sexual.*

America has spawned hordes of skillful scammers but only a precious few have concocted a scheme so brilliant that it became a work of art. Howard W. "Kroger" Babb is among those precious few. If there was an American Schemers Hall of Fame, Kroger Babb would be in that pestiferous pantheon.

"I'm just a country boy with a shoeshine," he liked to say, as any country hustler cozying up to a mark would. Actually, Babb was a country boy with a genius for salesmanship, showmanship, and unrelenting self-promotion. He was more accurate when he billed himself as "America's Fearless Young Showman."

Born in 1906 in Lees Creek, Ohio, Babb in his youth worked at a Kroger grocery; hence the nickname. He grew up to be a sportswriter and newspaper ad salesman. In his 20s, he got a job promoting the Ohio-based Chakeres-Warners cinema chain. He made his bones as a flack with an outrageous stunt—burying a man alive for six days in front of a theater in Wilmington, Ohio. The poor fellow—Babb billed him as "Digger O'Dell"—got air and food through a shaft positioned so that customers could gawk down at him before buying tickets.

In 1939, Babb traveled nationwide peddling *Dust to Dust*, a low-budget melodrama about a naïve high school girl who gets pregnant—the cheesy plot enlivened by footage of an actual birth and B-roll from a U.S. Army training film about venereal disease featuring hideously

FROM TOP: EVERETT COLLECTION; LIBRARY OF THE ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES

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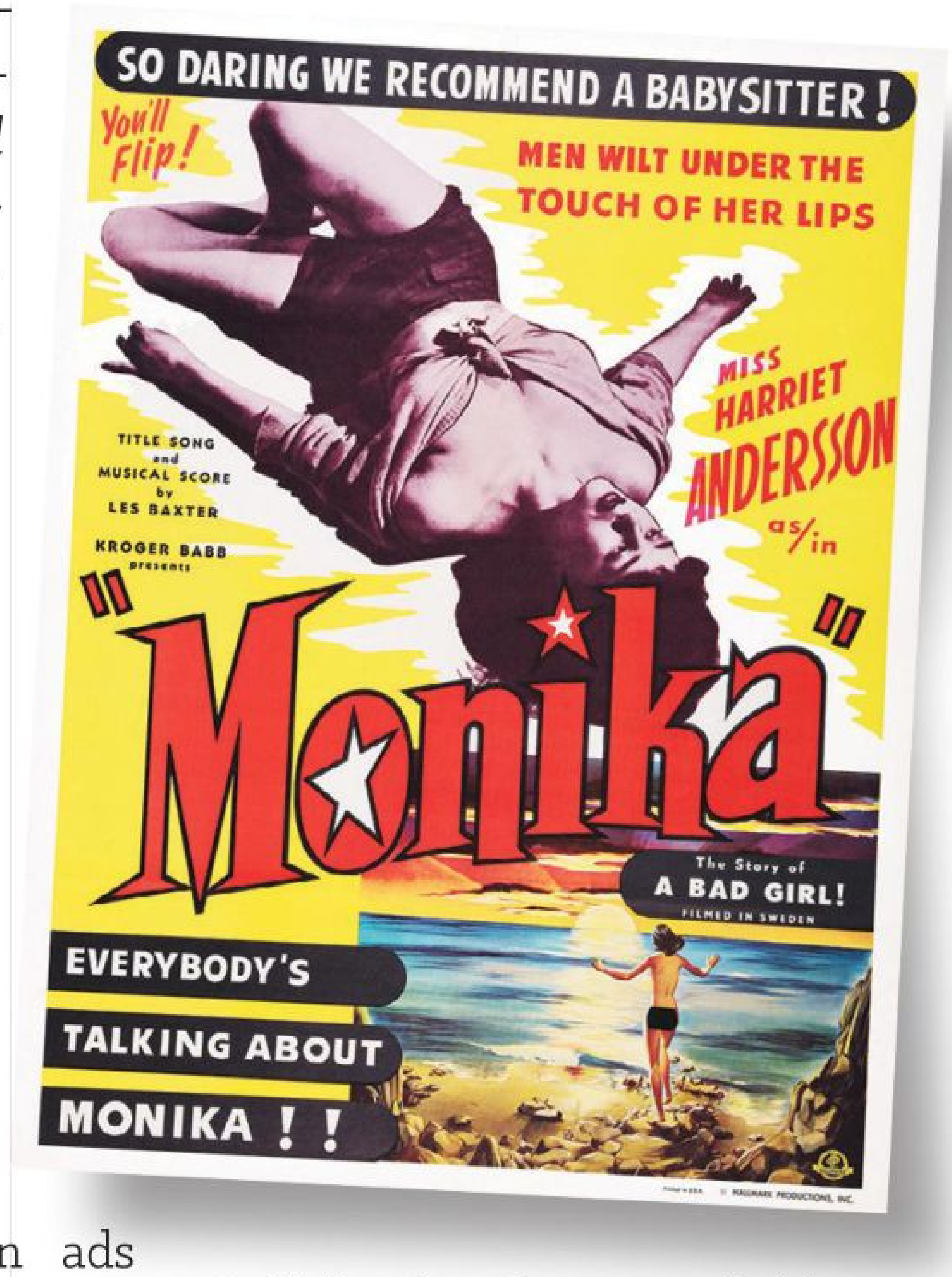
infected genitalia. *Dust to Dust* was awful but quite popular, which inspired Babb to create the masterpiece of sex and hype that made him rich—*Mom and Dad*.

"This dumb high school girl, very beautiful, wanted to know more about her body, about sex," Babb said in 1977, summarizing *Mom and Dad* for a *Washington Post* reporter. "But every time she asked her mother a question, the mother said, 'Tut tut, you're too young to know.' So then she went to a party, danced with a good-looking stranger and she got pregnant."

Babb stole that plot from *Dust to Dust* and hired Mildred Horn, his mistress—and later his second wife—to write the script. In 1944, Babb contracted with B-movie director William Beaudine to shoot the movie. Nicknamed "One-Shot" because he seldom did a second take, Beaudine filmed *Mom and Dad* in six days. Total cost: $62,000.

Not only did Babb swipe the plot of *Dust to Dust*, he also stole its gimmick, incorporating the same delivery room and horror-show VD footage into *Mom and Dad*. What the master added—his special sauce—was the Babb ballyhoo treatment, rooted in the notion that nothing sells like controversy. His company, Hygienic Productions, sanctimoniously touted *Mom and Dad* as a high-minded educational experience. "*Mom and Dad* is not just a *show*," Babb would tell anybody who'd listen. "It is a lighthouse in the darkness of human ignorance. It peels aside the veils of sexual superstition and suppression surrounding nature's most glorious and incredible act. It is the most vital presentation the vast American public has ever been privileged to attend."


SO DARING WE RECOMMEND A BABYSITTER!
You'll Flip!
MEN WILT UNDER THE TOUCH OF HER LIPS
MISS HARRIET ANDERSSON as/in
TITLE SONG and MUSICAL SCORE by LES BAXTER
KROGER BABB presents
"Monika"
The Story of A BAD GIRL!
FILMED IN SWEDEN
EVERYBODY'S
TALKING ABOUT
MONIKA !!

Ballyhooing Bergman *Babb was an eager adopter of the "unexpurgated European" line of promotional palaver.*

Who could resist—especially when ads screamed: "ONCE IN A LIFETIME Comes A Presentation That TRULY PULLS NO PUNCHES! Now YOU Can SEE The Motion Picture That DARES DISCUSS and EXPLAIN SEX As NEVER BEFORE SEEN and HEARD!"

And there were *lots* of those ads. A week before *Mom and Dad* was to play a local bijou, advance men plastered the area with posters. They also bought space in local papers for ads that frequently inspired ministers to denounce the movie as smut. If clerics ignored the bait, Babb mailed pseudonymous letters to the editor decrying *Mom and Dad*.

Babb delivered more than a mere movie. The *Mom and Dad* roadshow included one Elliot Forbes, billed as a sex expert and lecturing on "The Secrets of Sensible Sex." Two women in nurse's uniforms stood by to treat audience members who might faint from shock. In a genius stroke of hullaballoo, Babb insisted theater operators segregate screenings by sex. He'd schedule shows for women at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., pumping up excitement for the men-only event at 9.

Halfway through the movie—after protagonist Joan weeps to learn that the handsome pilot who impregnated her has died in a plane crash—*Mom and Dad* stopped. The house lights came up for an intermission, during which Forbes inveighed on behalf of sex ed while the "nurses" hawked a facts-of-life book written by…Mildred Horn. The film resumed with the live-birth and VD footage, which actually did cause some viewers to faint. "In Minneapolis," Babb bragged, "we had 'em laying there by the dozens on marble benches in the lobby, like slabs in a morgue."

The movie closed with a sequence featuring Babb himself. "If you agree that these pictures have been bold and shocking enough, that you've learned a very worthwhile lesson from them," he declaimed. "I wish you'd show the management your appreciation at this time—*by your applause*." And audiences applauded.

Local censors banned *Mom and Dad* countless times but Babb and his lawyer, Henry Fox, fought back. "Oh my God, you don't have any idea of the vigor with which opponents pursued this film," Fox later recalled. "They swore they'd die before they'd show the thing." But Babb and Fox generally won their court fights, arguing that *Mom and Dad* was educational—"*a lighthouse in the darkness*" and a valuable tool in the fight against teen pregnancy and social diseases.

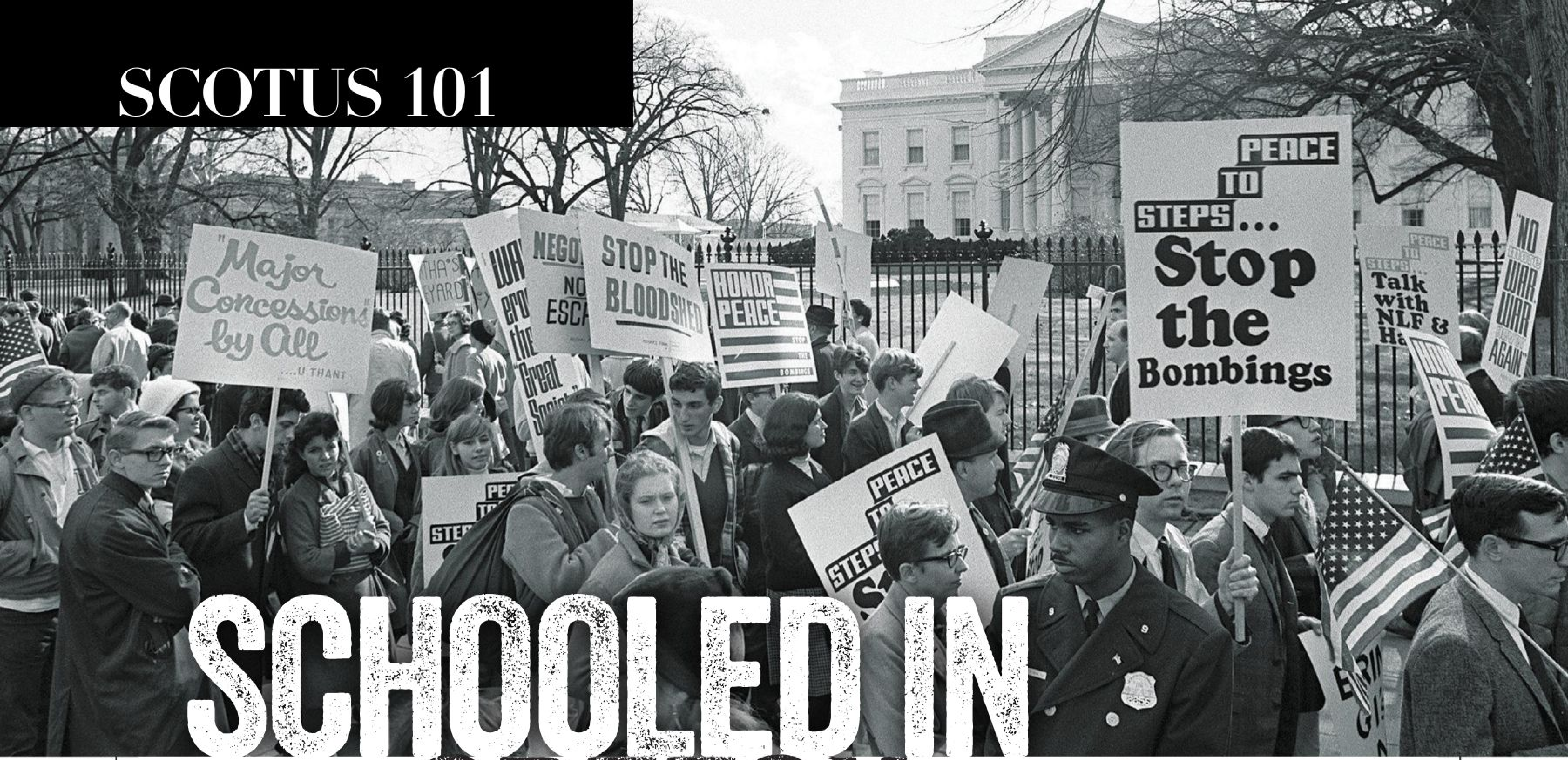
Through the '40s and '50s, a dozen or more *Mom and Dad* roadshows circulated simultaneously, each with its own "Elliot Forbes" and fake nurses. An all-black outfit featured Olympic hero Jesse Owens delivering the Forbes folderol. Between 1944 and 1977, *Mom and Dad* grossed between $40 million and $100 million—not counting receipts for those facts-of-life books.

Babb had other hits. He bought *Karamoja*, a documentary featuring naked Africans, that he flacked with the line, "They wear nothing but the wind." He imported *Summer With Monika*, a 1953 film by an obscure Swede named Ingmar Bergman that he retitled *Monika: The Story of a Bad Girl*. But it was *Mom and Dad* that made Babb a legend of hype.

Retired comfortably in Palm Springs, California, in 1977, three years before his death, the wizard of sexploitation grumbled that movies had become too smutty. "The pictures just got so bad, so filthy," Babb told an interviewer. "I just don't have any taste for 'em." ★

EVERETT COLLECTION

SCOTUS 101


"Major Concessions by All ...U THANT
STOP THE BLOODSHED
HONOR PEACE
PEACE TO STEPS... Stop the Bombings
Talk with NLF &
PEACE TO STEPS

SCHOOLED IN SPEECH

BY DANIEL B. MOSKOWITZ

TINKER V. DES MOINES
393 U.S. 503 (1969)
FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Rejecter *Justice Abe Fortas resoundingly rebuffed claims that public school students had no guarantee of freedom of speech.*

The core constitutional provisions constraining action that impinges on individual rights inhibit not only the federal government, but also every state and its subordinate governments, such as counties, cities, sanitation districts, and school districts. Historically, the Supreme Court has hesitated to apply those limits to public education. In a 1940 decision, Justice Felix Frankfurter explained that a more energetic application of the Bill of Rights to schools "would amount to no less than the pronouncement of pedagogical and psychological dogma in a field where courts possess no marked and certainly no controlling competence." It took the Vietnam War and three gutsy adolescents to persuade justices that the free speech guarantee applies in classrooms.

In March 1965, the first massed American combat troops landed in Vietnam. That July, President Lyndon Johnson said he would send another 50,000 men there and begin drafting 35,000 young men a month. In November, the war's first large-scale battle claimed almost 300 American lives. Opposition at home billowed. On November 20, 8,000 protested in Oakland, California. The following Saturday 20,000 protesters marched against the war in Washington, DC. Polls showed about a third of Americans opposed military involvement in Vietnam. In Des Moines, Iowa, Mary Beth Tinker, 13, her brother John, 15, and Christopher Eckhardt, 15, were part of a small group of students who agreed with the protesters. The young Iowans decided that as a show of opposition they would support New York Democratic Senator Robert Kennedy's call for a Christmas truce. The teenagers planned to make their point by fasting on Thursday, December 16, 1965, and by wearing black arm bands through the holidays. Administrators at local schools, learning of the imminent protest, hastily forbade students to wear armbands, with violators subject to suspension. On the chosen day, John, Chris, and four friends wore armbands bearing the peace symbol to Theodore Roosevelt High. Mary Beth wore one to Warren Harding Junior High. When they refused requests to remove their armbands, all seven were sent home. (The Tinkers' younger siblings wore armbands to their grade school without consequence.)

The Tinker and Eckhardt families, who were active in pacifist causes, did not accept the suspensions quietly. On behalf of their children, the fathers sought a federal court order barring schools from disciplining students for exercising their constitutional right to express a view on a vital political issue. The U.S. District Court threw out the suit, saying school

AFP/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

Resistance *At the White House in 1965 youthful activists protest the American presence in Vietnam.*

authorities had the power to squelch gestures they thought would stir disturbances. The families appealed that ruling to the Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis. Hearing the case, a three-judge panel took the unusual step of punting the matter to the entire court. The full eight-judge body split 4-4, which allowed the decision dismissing the case to stand.

By the time *Tinker v. Des Moines* reached the next forum—the U.S. Supreme Court—it was 1968. The war was tearing at the nation. Reluctant to wade into the controversy, the justices nonetheless feared that refusing the case would encourage lower courts to use it as a precedent to approve school bans on peaceful protests against the war. As early as 1931, the high court had decreed that constitutional protection extended to "expressive speech"—statements by symbol rather than in words. In oral argument, the students' lawyer argued that what was at stake was the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech. The school district insisted that it not only could act to maintain order and discipline, but had an absolute duty to do so.

When the justices met in private session after oral arguments, two things instantly became clear. First, all agreed that to maintain an orderly environment conducive to learning school authorities need leeway. "The schools are in great trouble," Justice Hugo Black ranted. "Children need discipline. The country is going to ruin because of it." He and Justice John M. Harlan II wanted to uphold the school board's ban on armbands. But the other seven justices sided with the students. Hesitance to involve the courts in school administration remained. The trick was finding a way to void the ban without cramping administrators' capacity to run schools. Justice Abe Fortas declared his readiness to rule that the students could not be disciplined for protesting but added that "school authorities can and must control the schools." On the day *Tinker* was argued at the Supreme Court, the court unanimously overturned an Arkansas ban on teaching evolution. Fortas had written that school free speech opinion, so Chief Justice Earl Warren assigned him the *Tinker* opinion. To write it Fortas had to find the balance between free speech rights and the need for discipline in schools.

Resisters *Mary Beth and John Tinker with the armbands that landed them in court.*

In his opinion for the seven-justice majority, Fortas resoundingly rejected the notion that public school students did not enjoy constitutional protections. "First Amendment rights, applied in the light of the special characteristics of the school environment, are available to teachers and students," he wrote. "It can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional right of freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate." Maintaining that right might spawn disagreements and disturbances, "but our Constitution says we must take that risk, and our history says that it is this sort of hazardous freedom—this kind of openness—that is the basis of our national strength and of the independence and vigor of Americans."

"On the other hand," Fortas continued, "the Court has repeatedly emphasized the need for affirming the comprehensive authority of the States and of school officials, consistent with fundamental constitutional safeguards, to prescribe and control conduct in the schools."

Des Moines school administrators feared that the wearing of armbands would trigger arguments and disruptions. *Tinker* provided advocates of staunch school discipline with a formula for constitutionally exercising their authority: school systems may bar speech given reasonable evidence that such speech would "materially and substantially" interfere with good scholastic order. Des Moines had no such proof, but in the decades since that standard has seen wide use to justify prohibiting student demonstrations.

Despite giving school administrators a rationale for limiting expressions of controversial views, "*Tinker* represented a momentous innovation in the recognition of students' constitutional rights," University of Chicago law professor Justine Driver wrote recently. "For the first time, the Supreme Court recognized that students retain the essential power to communicate their ideas to one another; such communication is not extraneous to the educational process but instead forms an integral part of that process; and public schools have an acute responsibility to tolerate dissident speech." Judges have invoked *Tinker* in hundreds of cases upholding students' rights to demonstrate, publish controversial articles in student publications, wear hair longer than authorities think seemly, and, yes, in a 2008 case in Arkansas, protest a school uniform policy by wearing black armbands.

In 2013, after a career as a pediatric nurse, Mary Beth Tinker retired. Each year she tours American high schools, telling her story and encouraging student political activism. ★

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

ETHAN WELTY/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

NATIVE SAINT

BY SARAH RICHARDSON

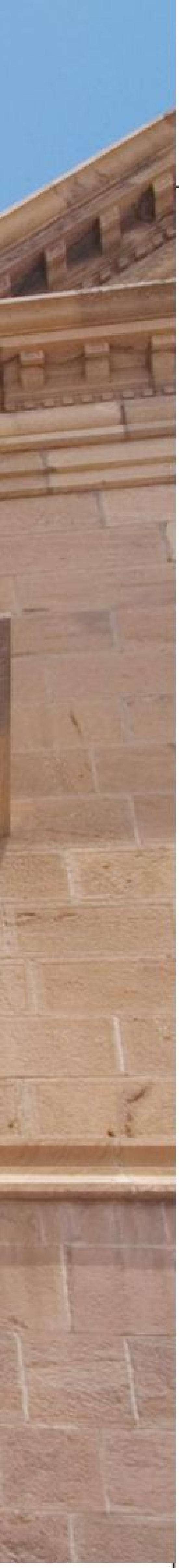
"It is no powerful spirit, no famous conqueror who protects the double empire of the French," wrote François-René de Chateaubriand in *Les Natchez*, a 1794 novel inspired by the religious romantic's travels in America. "It is a shepherdess in Europe, an Indian maid in America; Genevieve of the hamlet of Nanterre and Kateri of the Canadian forests." "Kateri" is Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American Roman Catholic saint. Her figure in bronze adorns the doors of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, and in 1966, Canadian poet Leonard Cohen featured her in his debut novel, *Beautiful Losers*. Her spirit of devotion lives on in Kateri circles, groups of prayerful Christians and others who find inspiration in Tekakwitha's brief, intense life.

Born in 1656 into a Mohawk family near what is now Auriesville, in upstate New York, she survived smallpox, which killed her parents and badly damaged her eyes. The smallpox virus, inadvertently introduced by Europeans, so ravaged indigenous populations that communities undertook new social formations. Amid this upheaval, young Kateri found solace in the Christianity introduced by Jesuit missionaries. In 2012, more than three centuries after her death, the church named her a saint.

Tekakwitha grew up in a tangle of cultures, Native American and European. Unlike the Spanish in the New World, the French made inroads not as conquerors but as commercial and religious agents. Small cadres of Jesuits set up lucrative trading partnerships. These efforts often created or aggravated rivalries among the affiliated Iroquois groups of Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca. The disruption extended to their enemies—the Huron, Ottawa, and Algonquin—who inhabited the swath of land from Michigan to the New York coast. Native American society was a patchwork of tribal remnants fighting to survive imported disease and the colonial ambitions of France, the Netherlands, and England.

In his sensitive cultural biography *Mohawk Saint,* historian Allan Greer describes the Mourning War Complex, a paroxysm of grief and combat in which tribes tortured captives in ritual remembrance of lives lost. A tribe could replenish itself by adopting those who survived or were spared. Tekakwitha's own mother, a Christian Algonquin Indian captured and adopted by the Mohawks, had been taken as a spouse by the girl's Mohawk father.

Tekakwitha was a frail child, quiet and dutiful, at least on the surface. By adolescence, she



All-American Saint
A statue of St. Kateri Tekakwitha by Jemez Pueblo sculptor Estella Loretto stands in the courtyard of St. Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

had established herself as an independent member of her extended family. She performed traditional women's duties, preparing furs, food, and needlework, but refused repeated appeals to marry—a bold move in a matriarchal culture that absorbed men as husbands and hunters.

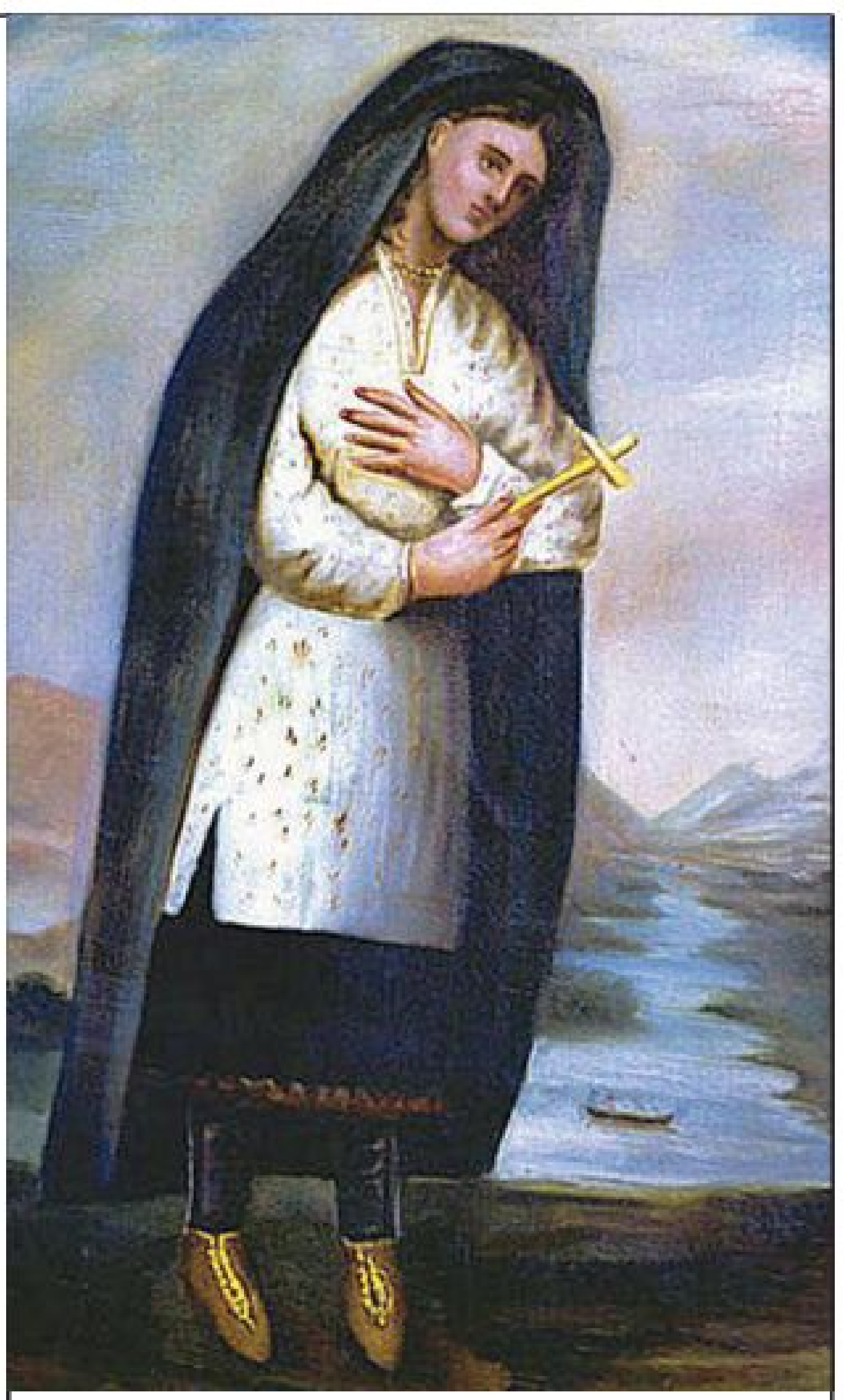
Local Native American religion shared aspects of the Christian traditions of self-denial and mortification: abstinence from sexual activity and fasting to sharpen one's sense of purpose in battle. Both traditions incorporated wise elders, distinctive dress, incantations, ritual mortification and accessories such as beads, smoke, and incense. However, Christian emphasis on celibacy and on devotion that isolated a worshipper from his or her family kept most natives from converting.

Tekakwitha, however, enjoyed that spiritual space, an interest encouraged by a Jesuit visiting her village when she was 18. Two years later, with a Christian relative's help, she fled her village for Kahnawake, a Christian community of indigenous people near Montreal led by four men, two Mohawk and two Huron. There she found common ground with other native women, especially a young Oneida widow who shared her interest in Christianity. The two formed a secret society that gradually admitted more members to gather in the woods to perform ritual flagellation—more than a thousand beatings at a time—and other forms of ascetic worship. Greer suggests that the self-inflicted pain can be seen as a way of commanding life's cruelty and sorrow, assigning to suffering a sacred purpose.

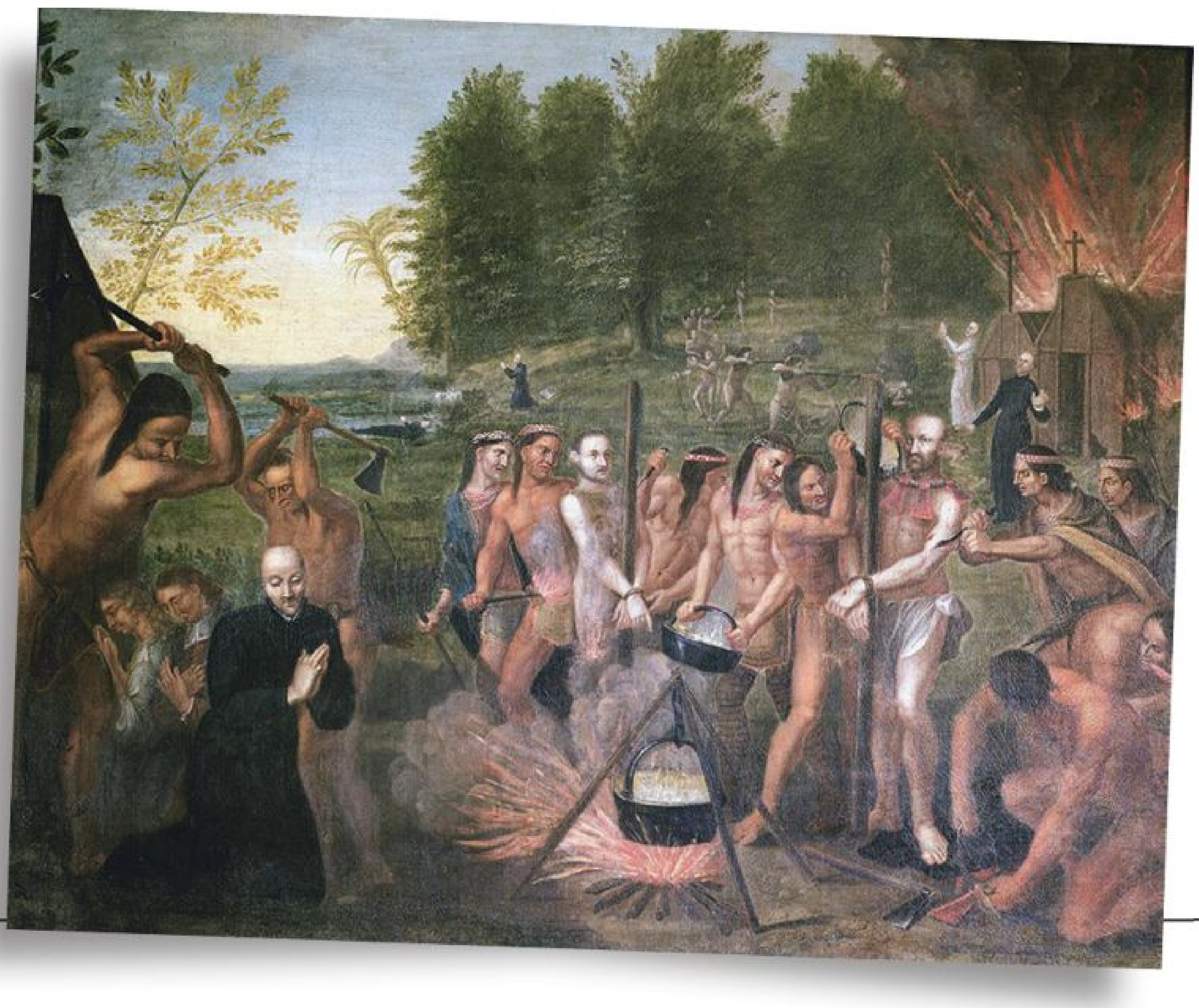
Kateri's commitment caught the eye of Claude Chauchetière, a Jesuit who found in her life a curious parallel to his own religious awakening in France. Details of Tekakwitha's life are known through biographies that Chauchetière and fellow Jesuit Pierre Cholenec published in the 1690s. Chauchetière had praise for Tekakwitha's industry, asceticism, and chastity. But the intensity of her mortification regimen shocked him; he urged, to no avail, that she shift to more conventional ordeals such as hair shirts and nail-studded belts. Tekakwitha went barefoot in snow, put ashes in her food, and, when she learned one could fashion a bed of thorns, made one and used it. As for chastity, she confided to Father Chauchetière, "I hate men. I have the deepest aversion to marriage."

The intensity of Tekakwitha's ascetic faith attracted curiosity and respect. Upon her death from a feverish illness at 24, her appearance was said to brighten visibly, a glow noted in the case made for her elevation to sainthood. The canonization campaign relied on posthumous instances in which relics associated with her were noted for curative powers. Emulating her mortification, women from her village known as Kateri's Sisters kept her memory alive. White settlers invoked her help in overcoming suffering and illness.

Tekakwitha's reputation percolated for centuries. In 1884, adherents established a 10-acre shrine to her not far from her birthplace. The facility also honored martyred Jesuits Isaac Jogues and René Goupil; the men, among the earliest members of the Society of Jesus to come to Canada, were killed by Mohawks in the 1640s in that same vicinity. A biography in English, *Lily of the Mohawks*, appeared in 1891. In 1930, the church canonized Jogues and Goupil. As a native figure hallowed by Catholicism, Kateri Tekakwitha had long helped win Native American converts, who championed the case for her sainthood. Beatified in 1980, Tekakwitha was canonized in 2012. Her Jesuit biographer, Father Claude Chauchetière, called her "a holy bee, seeking to gather honey from all sorts of flowers." ★



TEKAKWITHA WENT SHOELESS IN THE SNOW, PUT ASHES IN HER FOOD, AND LAY ON A BED OF THORNS.



Hard Early Days
Tekakwitha, top, scourged herself; Jesuit missionaries died as martyrs at the hands of Native American tribes.

THE PICTURE ART COLLECTION/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; HOTEL DE DIEU COLLECTION, QUEBEC, CANADA/BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

American History

STYLE

We peruse a museum and book that honor a statue which needs no introduction and visit a mansion on Long Island's North Shore recast as a luxury hotel and event venue.

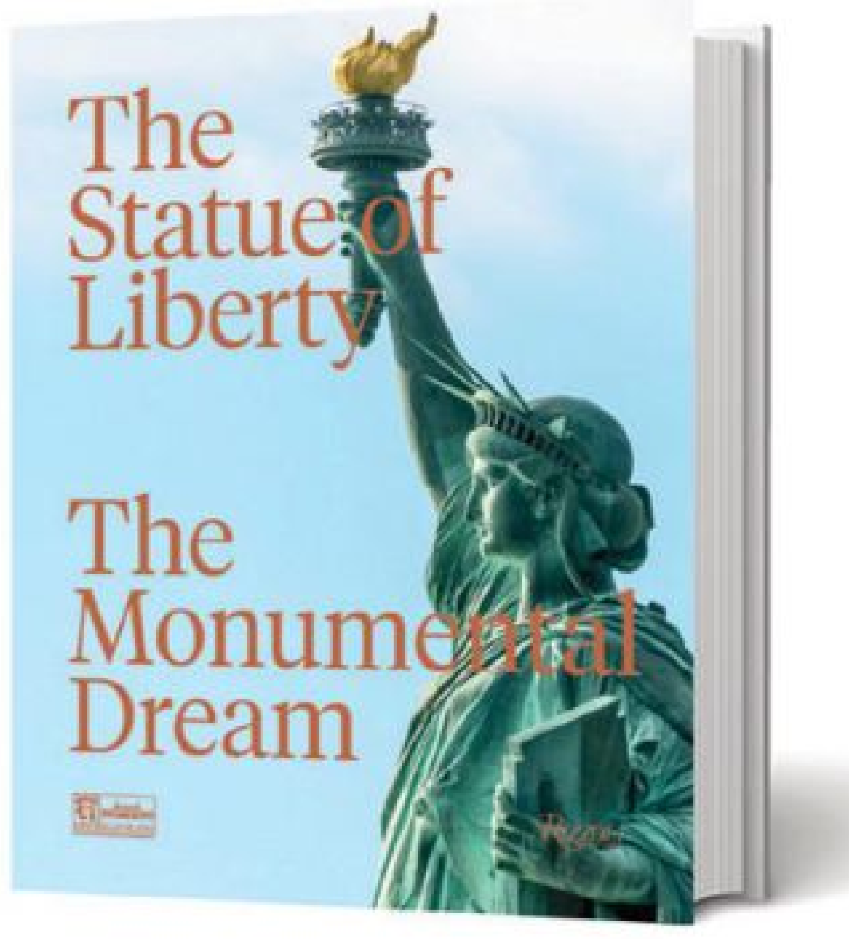
The Statue of Liberty being assembled on Bedloe's Island, circa 1886. The island was officially renamed Liberty Island in 1956.

As a quality control check, crews in Paris set up the statue on rue Chazelle in 1884-85.

Top right: Sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi designed the Statue of Liberty. Statue and pedestal rise 305 feet from the ground.

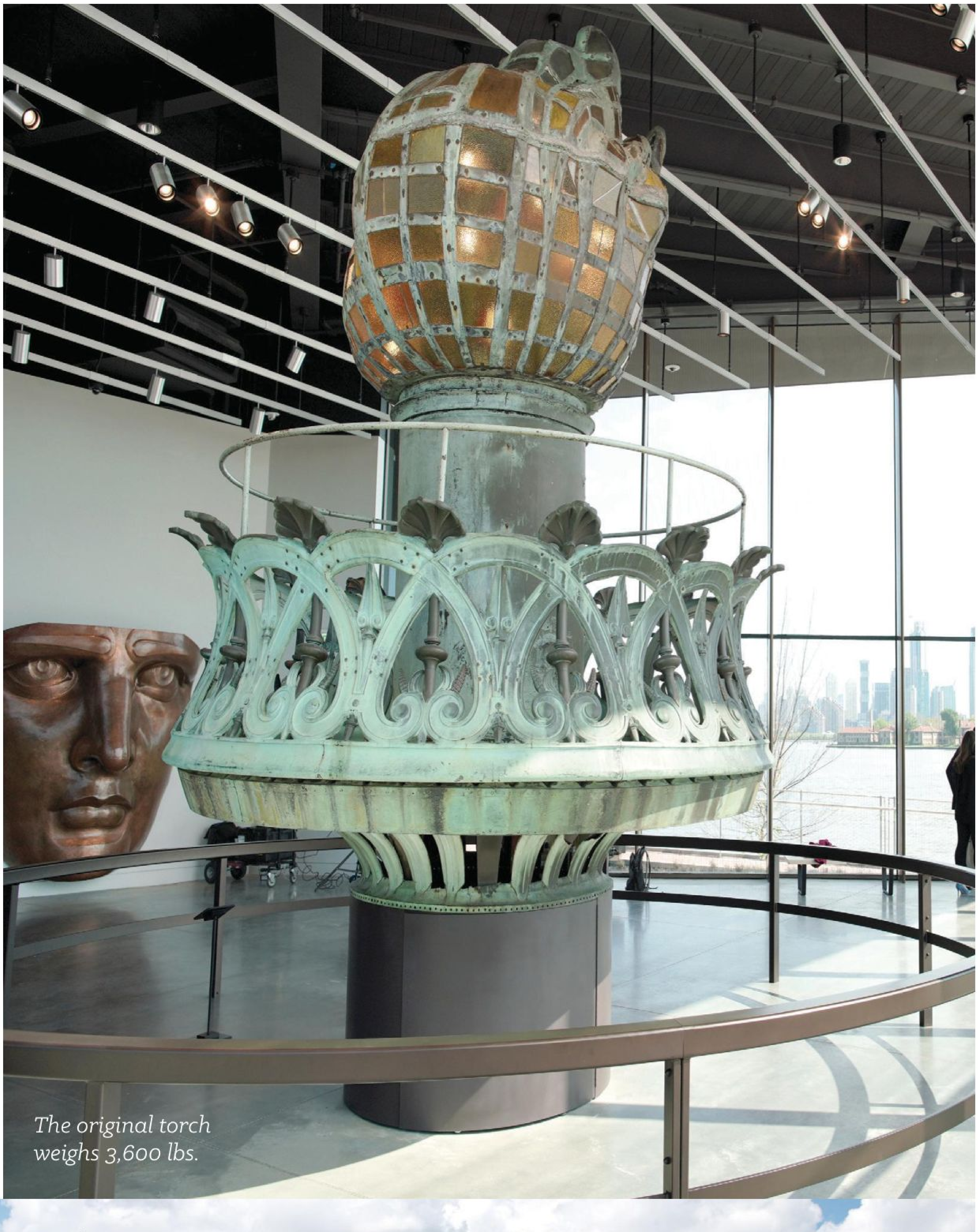
PHOTOS COURTESY RIZZOLI (INCLUDING PREVIOUS SPREAD)

Our Fair Lady
Rizzoli and the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation have published Robert Belot's *The Statue of Liberty, The Monumental Dream*. This volume's 207 pages recount the untold story of the icon's conception, design, construction, installation, restoration, and status as a symbol of freedom. Belot presents this fascinating history through archival and current-day images, including many details from ephemera in the Statue of Liberty Museum collection. $50, rizzolibookstore.com

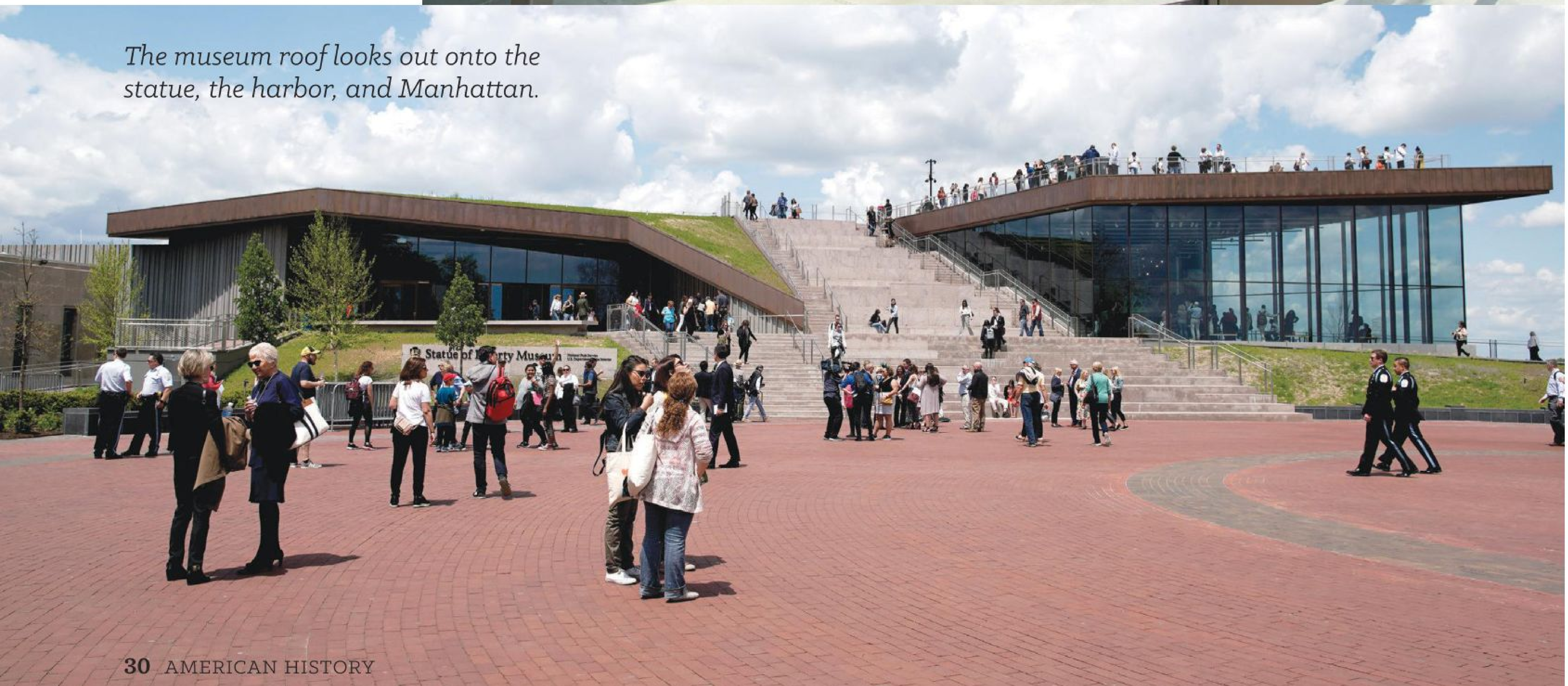


Torch Song

The **Statue of Liberty Museum** opened in May 2019 on Liberty Island. The 26,000-square-foot facility's three galleries offer visitors a vivid and varied array of lore and artifacts associated with the famous statue, such as the original torch, dedicated in 1886 and removed and replaced a century later. From the roof, planted with native wild grasses, museumgoers enjoy views of Lady Liberty, New York Harbor, and lower Manhattan. Admission is included in the price of a Statue Cruises ferry ticket to Liberty and Ellis islands. The museum is part of a $100 million beautification by The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation—statueoflibertymuseum.org.

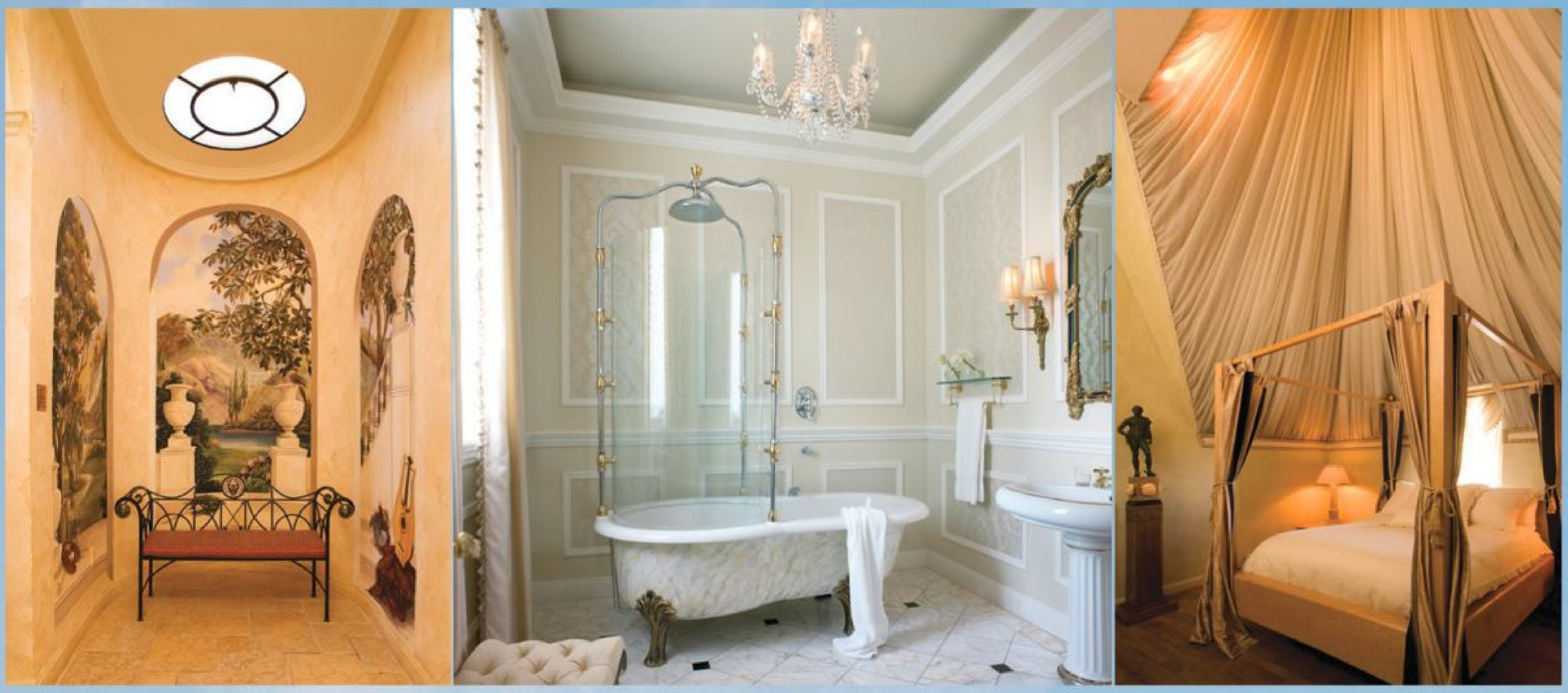


The original torch weighs 3,600 lbs.



The museum roof looks out onto the statue, the harbor, and Manhattan.

PHOTO COURTESY THE STATUE OF LIBERTY MUSEUM



Home Suite Home
When an earlier estate he owned burned, banker, philanthropist, and arts patron Otto Hermann Kahn took four years—1915-19—to build fireproof **Oheka Castle** on Long Island, tagging his North Shore mansion with letters from his name. Kahn died in 1934. The 109,000-square-foot redoubt went on to serve as a retreat for sanitation workers, a military school, and a much-vandalized ruin. The grounds became neighborhoods. In the early 2000s, Oheka Castle, renovated and updated, became a 32-room hotel and event site available for tours by reservation.—oheka.com.

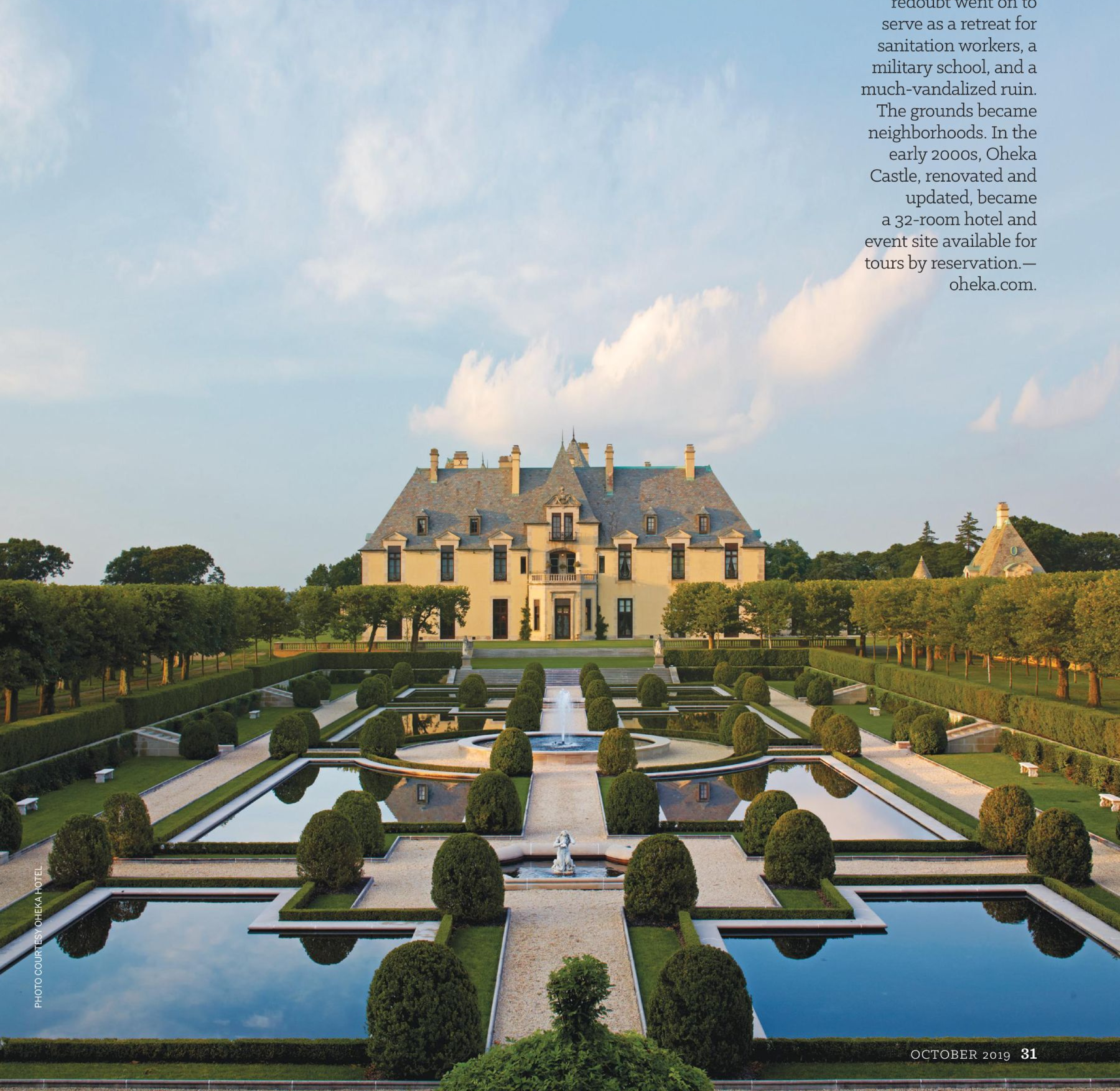


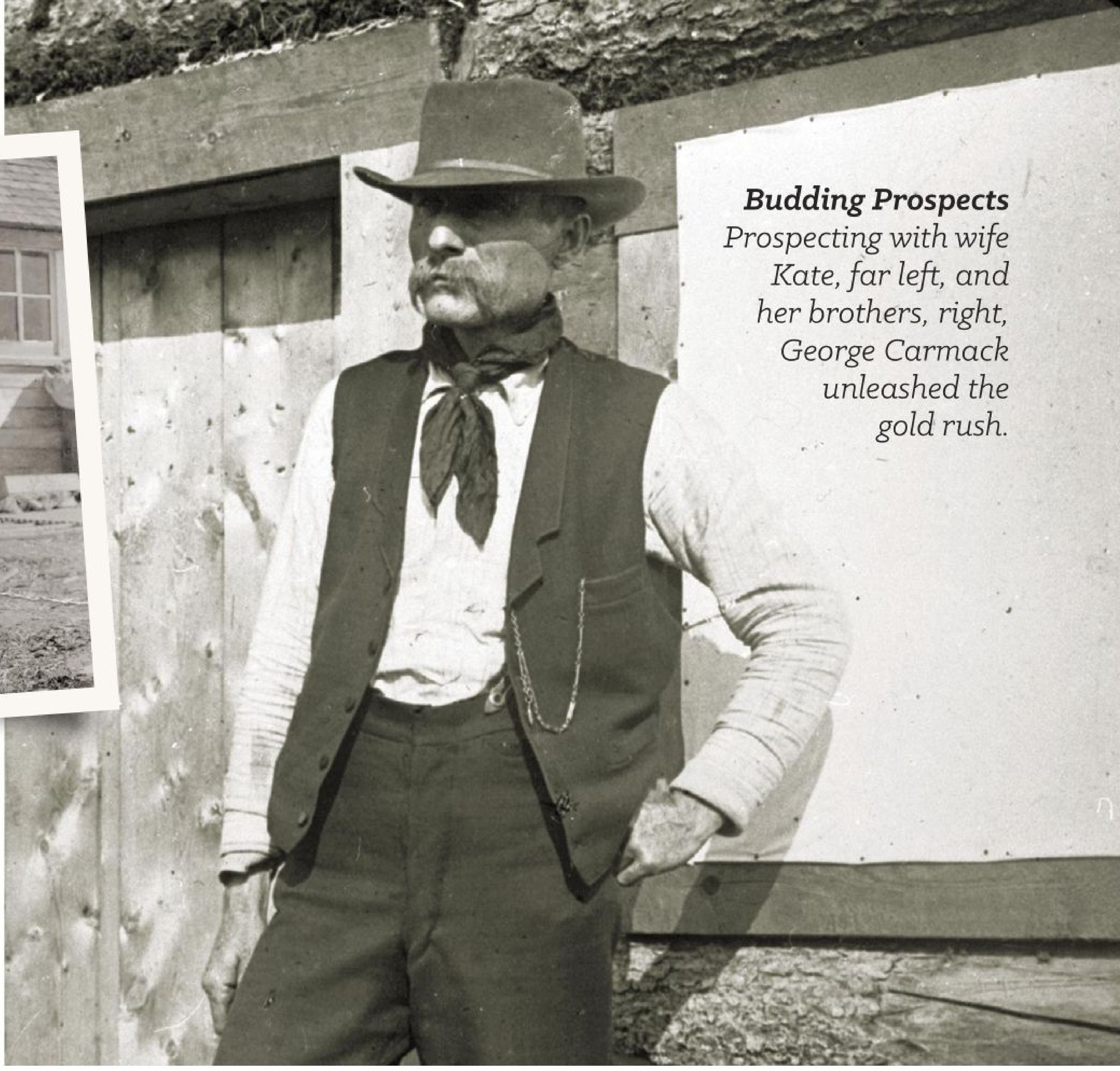
PHOTO COURTESY OHEKA HOTEL

Colors of Gold
As at Bonanza Creek, gold sometimes first draws eyes in the form of nuggets on the surface. Between 1896 and 2013, the Klondike yielded 14 million ounces of the precious metal.

The Weight of Gold

A phenomenal strike in the Klondike set Canada and America at loggerheads

By Mike Coppock



Budding Prospects
Prospecting with wife Kate, far left, and her brothers, right, George Carmack unleashed the gold rush.

George Carmack was one of those fellows whom poet Robert Service described as belonging to a "race of men who don't fit in." A U.S. Marine Corps deserter, Carmack was 22 when he wandered to Alaska in 1882. He wanted to go deep into the wilderness, but the Coast Range stood in the way—except at passes like Chilkoot, reached by a precipitous 3,057-foot climb that Carmack slogged as a porter, carrying freight on a path too steep for pack animals. From the far slope spread a vast space inhabited in 1882 by only 2,000 non-native men and women. Their camps and cabins dotted the Yukon River's stream to the Bering Sea, 2,000 miles away. Soon Carmack was living among these rugged individualists, who called themselves "sourdoughs," after the yeasty starter they carried to make bread for themselves in a land without stores. In those 330,000 square miles of wild, the lone trace of civilization was Fortymile, a smudge of a town near where the Yukon flowed into Alaska from Canada's Yukon Territory. This corner of Canada east of the Coast Range was known as the Klondike—an Anglophone rendering of what indigenous people called the region.

While many Americans in the lower latitudes had been heading west, a cantankerous few had reached the Pacific and turned north, drifting up to the flank of the Coast Range and crossing the mountains over notches like Chilkoot, White, and Chilkat passes and along rivers like the Stikine, in the territory's panhandle, and the Copper, in central Alaska. Besides learning to trap, cure, and sell fur-bearing animals' pelts, sourdoughs acquired the rudiments of gold prospecting. Few had any skill at the task, except for knowing the process of filing claims on spots where gold turned up. Staking a claim was simple, and literal. Finding gold, a prospector fashioned wooden poles, by regulation four feet in length, and staked out the corners of an area not to exceed 20 acres. The prospective miner then had to file a written description of the locale he was claiming at the land office, in this case in Fortymile—public notice that he declared that spot his own. A claim applied until a claimant ceased mining at the site. Local miners' committees recognized and enforced claims.

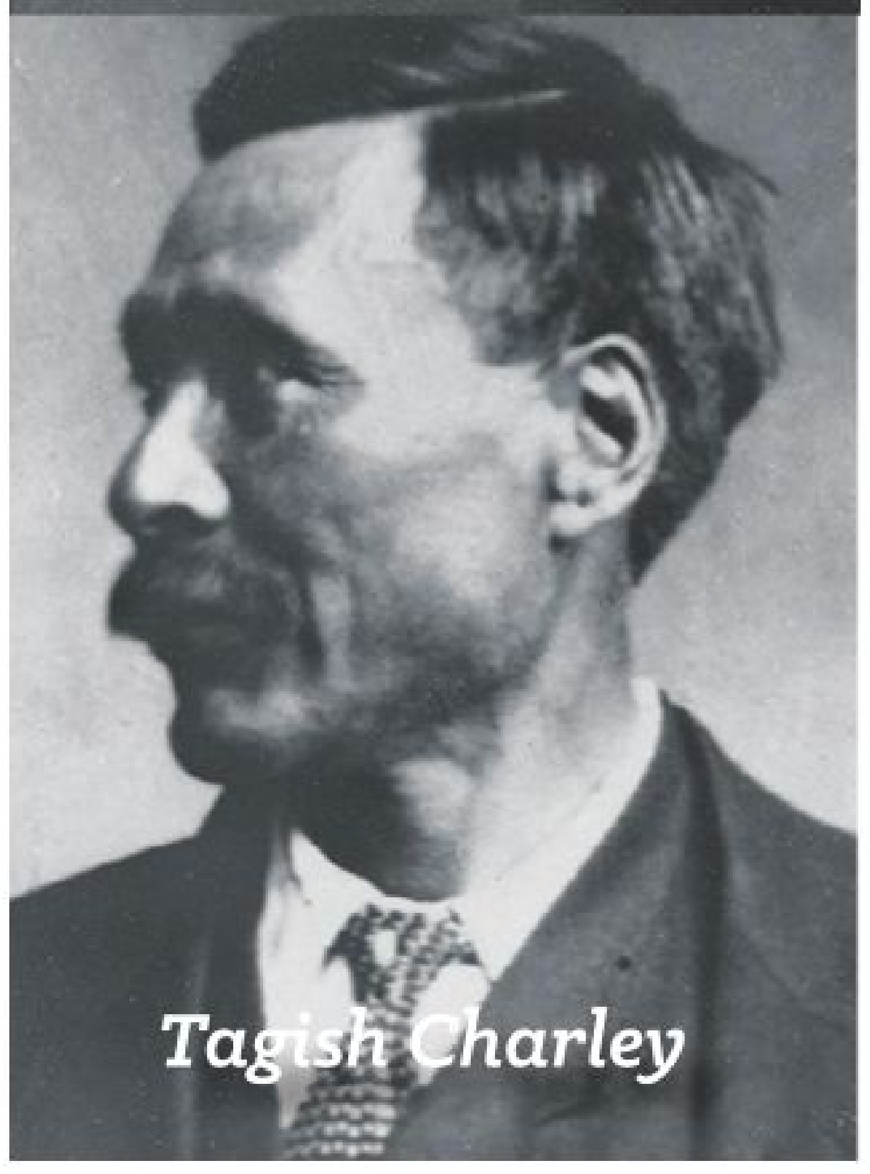
In the wild, gold sometimes appears in its pure form as flakes that settle in streambeds. A deft hand with a shallow pan can use water to swirl away dross, leaving a sparkle. Gold can be embedded in quartz, accessible only by mining. In the Klondike, nuggets could be unearthed along a 700-mile stretch of the Yukon River in what geologists call the Tintina Gold Province, where erosion ground down an ancient mountain range.

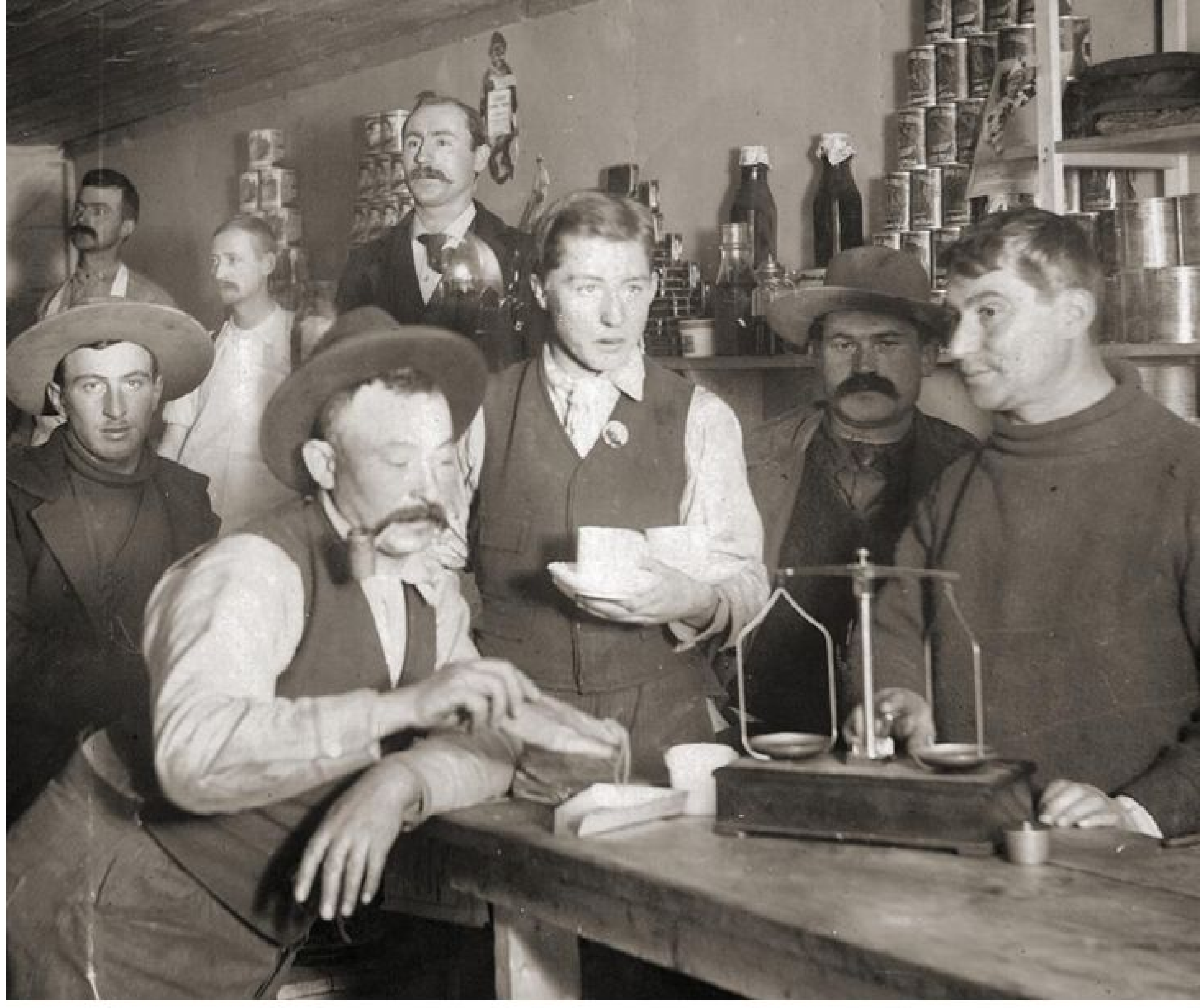
Carmack lived off the land and for himself, trapping animals and occasionally finding small gold deposits. He sold pelts, nuggets, and dust to local trading posts. He married a Native woman named Kate. In August 1896—in the Klondike, August is autumn; winter starts in late September—he was living along the Yukon with Kate and brothers-in-law Skookum Jim and Tagish Charley. Gold was bringing $20.67 an ounce. As the four were fishing on Klondike Creek where it emptied into the Yukon, they came upon fellow sourdough Robert Henderson, who was hunting for gold on unclaimed land. Carmack, 36, asked Henderson how he was doing. Henderson had found a little gold, but told Carmack the pickings were slimmer than on Rabbit Creek, which flowed into Klondike Creek less than ten miles upstream from Carmack's fish camp. Carmack moved his extended family to Rabbit Creek and set about prospecting. They came up dry until Skookum Jim, raising his rifle to shoot a moose, saw a flash in the water. Rabbit Creek, thickly forested on either bank, was laden with nuggets. Jim, Charley, and Carmack filled supply bags with gold. Carmack headed for Fortymile, 52 miles downstream, to file a claim and get a drink.

At Bill McPhee's saloon, raving about his score, Carmack stood the

PREVIOUS PAGE: DIARMUID/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; THIS PAGE: LEFT: YUKON ARCHIVES; RIGHT: ALASKA STATE ARCHIVES, CHARLES METCALF, CHARLES HORTON METCALF PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, IMG# ASL-P34-134; UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LIBRARIES, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UW14504

Skookum Jim


Tagish Charley


No Thumbs, Please
At Dawson and other Klondike locations, gold dust was a medium of exchange, its value gauged by scales.

house to a round. His companions were an odd lot. Four kept pet moose—in their cabins. Unable to afford dogs, Frank Buteau used a sail to propel his sled. Paddy Meehan had made himself dentures by shaping tin spoons to his gums, installing front teeth from mountain sheep in place of his own and molars from a bear he had shot as the predator was trying to get into his cabin.

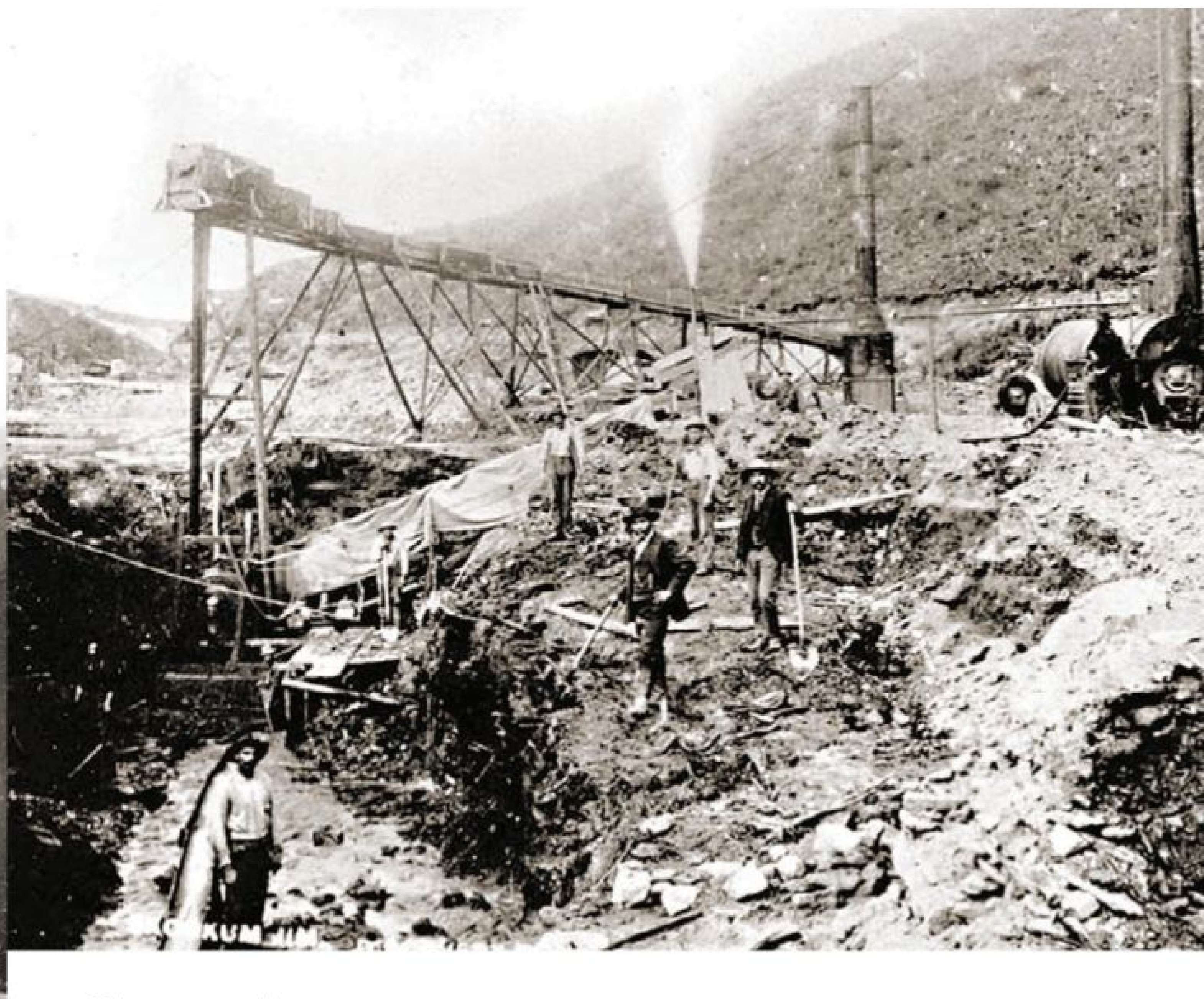
Like Carmack, the gold bugs at McPhee's had been chasing all over the Klondike for years. Recession-weary Americans saw gold as the only secure asset. High unemployment and distrust in banks, particularly a suspicion that establishment bankers—and the government—favored the Eastern Seaboard, inspired many Westerners to strike out for Alaska.

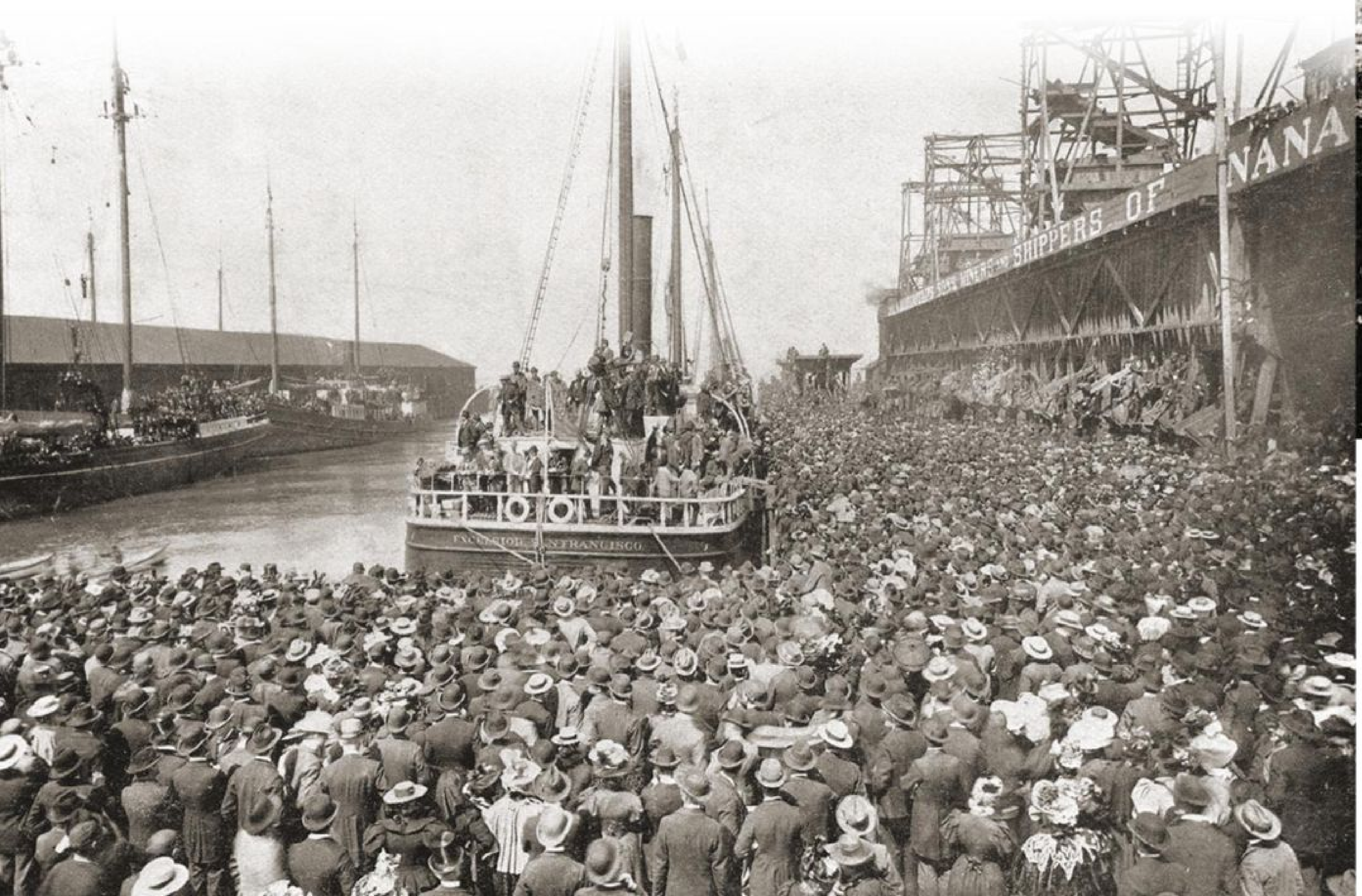
At McPhee's, Carmack paid his tab in nuggets and left. Fortymile's population moved to Klondike Creek, where a tent town bloomed. To serve its occupants, entrepreneurs founded a supply camp they called Dawson. Soon the banks of Klondike and and Rabbit creek were excavated to permafrost, the stratum of Yukon earth that never thaws. Creekside bonfires softened the ground enough for picks and shovels to hack free chunks of "muck"—an eons-old hard-frozen mix of humus and decayed vegetation that with the spring thaw would yield whatever gold it held. When winter clamped down in earnest in November, miners holed up. Their presence on Klondike Creek interested Canadian Northwest Mounted Police Inspector Charles Constantine, who commanded a small detachment at Fortymile. Noting that nearly all the miners at the strike were American—they claimed Fortymile was in Alaska, but in 1894 Constantine, shooting the sun, had determined the town to be in the Yukon, a finding confirmed by a surveyor—Constantine rode to the coast. From the Presbyterian mission settlement of Haines, he sailed south to Vancouver, British Columbia. He telegraphed his superiors in Ottawa, alerting them to the informal invasion. The spring thaw confirmed what Carmack's initial strike had predicted and Constantine's telegram implied. The ensuing gold rush brought the United States dangerously close to war with the British Empire.

The Klondike had neither telegraph lines nor roads, but ever since the Americans had bought Alaska from Russia in 1867 they had been studying the place. In 1884, a U.S. Army expedition led by Lieutenant William Abercrombie mapped the "All-American Route" to the Klondike. The map showed a path up the Copper River from the Gulf of Alaska to the Yukon River. Only Abercrombie knew his report was a fake. The route he claimed to have mapped did not exist.

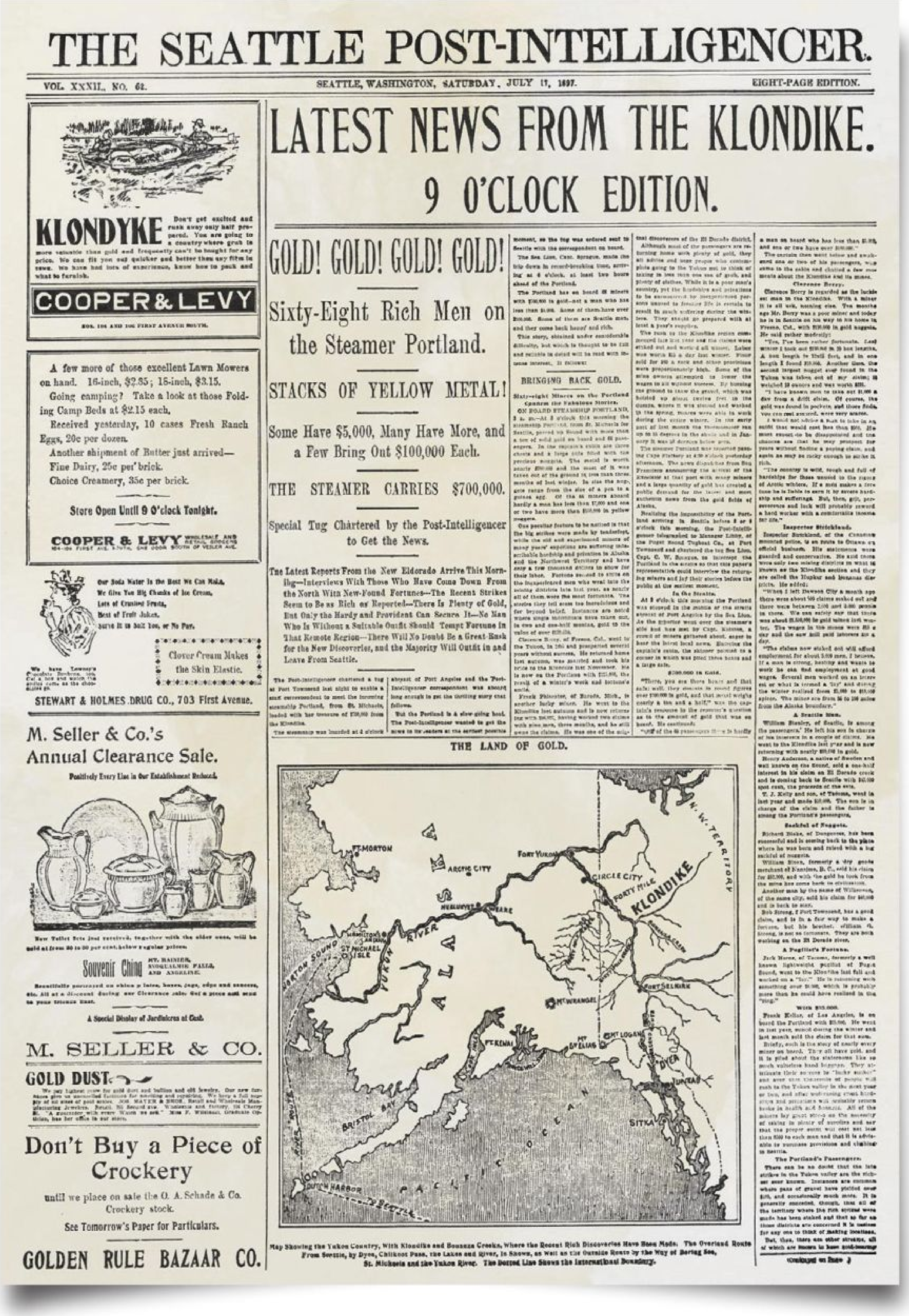
To reach the greater world, word of the Klondike strike had to wait until spring, when prospectors sailed the Yukon to the Bering seaport of St. Michael, Alaska, to board the southbound steamers *Portland* and *Excelsior*. On July 14, 1897, the *Excelsior* docked at San Francisco,

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA (2); ALASKA STATE ARCHIVES, WICKERSHAM STATE HISTORIC SITE, IMAGE # ASL-P277-001-203; HISTORY AND ART COLLECTION/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON





Effect and Cause
Excitement about the 1896 strike at Rabbit Creek, above with Skookum Jim at center, had only begun to reverberate in San Francisco in July 1897 when the crew of steamer Excelsior, *left, was departing for Alaska.*



THE SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER.

VOL. XXXII., NO. 62. SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, SATURDAY, JULY 17, 1897. EIGHT-PAGE EDITION.

LATEST NEWS FROM THE KLONDIKE.

9 O'CLOCK EDITION.

GOLD! GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!

Sixty-Eight Rich Men on the Steamer Portland.

STACKS OF YELLOW METAL!

Some Have $5,000, Many Have More, and a Few Bring Out $100,000 Each.

THE STEAMER CARRIES $700,000.

Special Tug Chartered by the Post-Intelligencer to Get the News.

The Latest Reports From the New Eldorado Arrive This Morning—Interviews With Those Who Have Come Down From the North With New-Found Fortunes—The Recent Strikes Seem to Be as Rich as Reported—There Is Plenty of Gold, But Only the Hardy and Provident Can Secure It—No Man Who Is Without a Suitable Outfit Should Tempt Fortune in That Remote Region—There Will No Doubt Be a Great Rush for the New Discoveries, and the Majority Will Outfit in and Leave From Seattle.

BRINGING BACK GOLD.

THE LAND OF GOLD.

Map Showing the Yukon Country, With Klondike and Bonanza Creeks, Where the Recent Rich Discoveries Have Been Made. The Overland Route From Seattle, by Dyea, Chilkoot Pass, the Lakes and River, Is Shown, as Well as the Outside Route by the Way of Bering Sea, St. Michaels and the Yukon River. The Dotted Line Shows the International Boundary.

The Portland's Passengers.

KLONDYKE Don't get excited and rush away only half prepared. You are going to a country where grub is more valuable than gold and frequently can't be bought for any price. We can fit you out quicker and better than any firm in town. We have had lots of experience, know how to pack and what to furnish.

COOPER & LEVY

A few more of those excellent Lawn Mowers on hand. 16-inch, $2.85; 18-inch, $3.15.

Going camping? Take a look at those Folding Camp Beds at $2.15 each.

Received yesterday, 10 cases Fresh Ranch Eggs, 20c per dozen.

Another shipment of Butter just arrived—

Fine Dairy, 25c per brick.

Choice Creamery, 35c per brick.

Store Open Until 9 O'clock Tonight.

COOPER & LEVY

Our Soda Water Is the Best We Can Make,

We Give You Big Chunks of Ice Cream,

Lots of Crushed Fruits,

Best of Fruit Juices,

Sure It Is Just Too, or No Pay.

Clover Cream Makes the Skin Elastic.

STEWART & HOLMES DRUG CO., 703 First Avenue.

M. Seller & Co.'s Annual Clearance Sale.

Positively Every Line in Our Establishment Reduced.

Souvenir China MT. RAINIER, SNOQUALMIE FALLS, AND ANGELINE.

A Special Display of Jardinieres at Cost.

M. SELLER & CO.

GOLD DUST.

Don't Buy a Piece of Crockery

until we place on sale the O. A. Schade & Co. Crockery stock.

See Tomorrow's Paper for Particulars.

GOLDEN RULE BAZAAR CO.

Headline Fodder
Newspapers across the Lower 48 helped stoke the fires of gold fever.

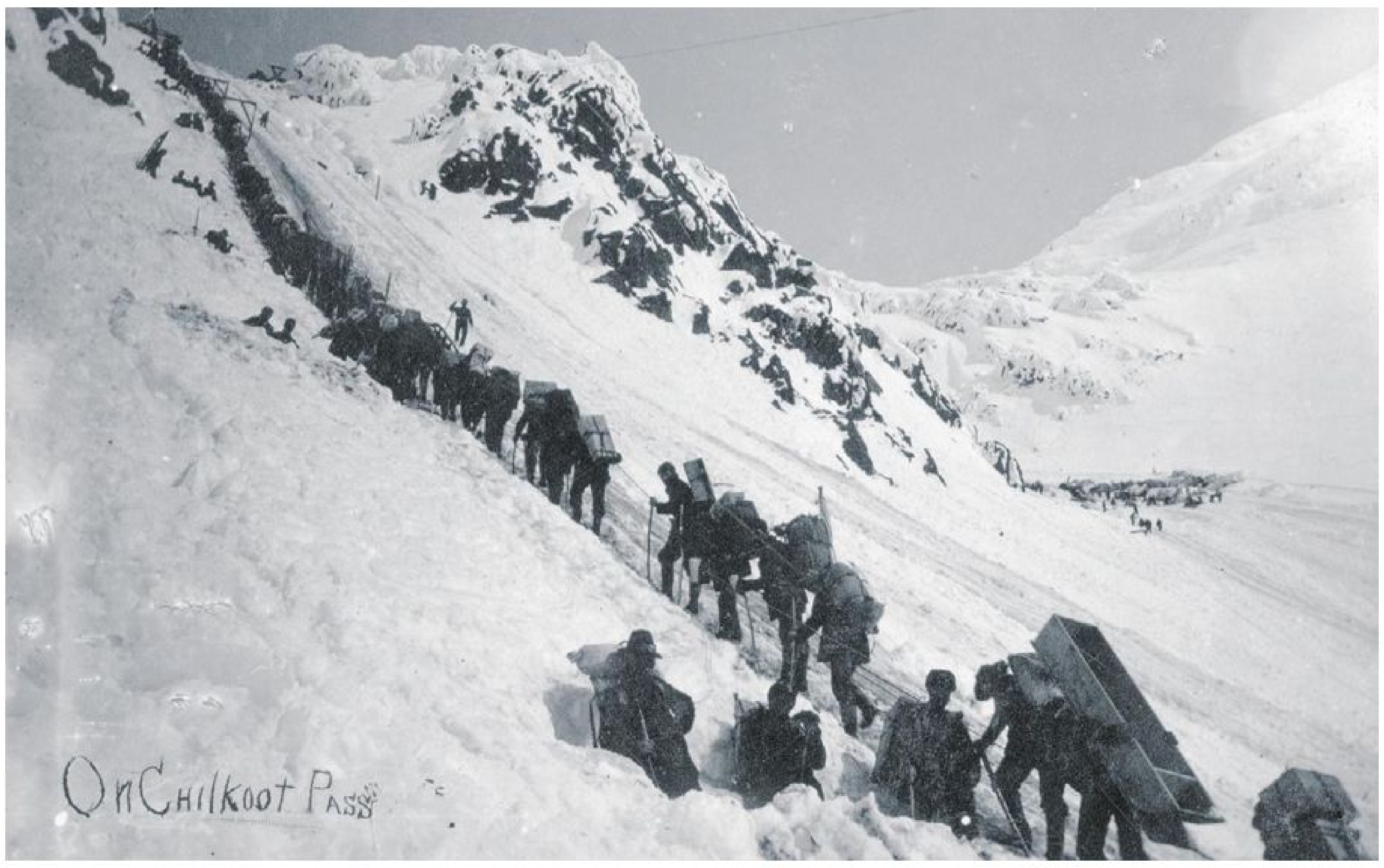
disgorging gold-laden passengers. Within two days, alerted by telegram, 5,000 people were waiting at Seattle, Washington, as *Portland*, in its hold more than a ton of gold, tied up. Along the West Coast, anything that would float turned north, especially in Seattle, where hordes jammed the wharves. Store clerks quit. Streetcar operators retired mid-run. Gold bugs streamed into town, buying up gear and stealing dogs to smuggle north.

Taking the bogus Abercrombie map at face value, Klondike-bound prospectors traveled to what he had described as the trailhead to learn that there was no trail. A raggle-taggle town sprang up; today it is Valdez, Alaska. The phony map also flummoxed the U.S. Army until work began to break a trail, along which the Army built a series of forts from the coast to the Canadian border.

Seattle Mayor W.D. Wood was in San Francisco when *Excelsior* docked. He telegraphed his resignation from office, raised $150,000, and bought a steamer to take him and paying passengers to St. Michael. John McGraw, president of the First National Bank of Seattle, sailed to Alaska on *Portland*'s return voyage. So did a Seattle man dying of lung disease who from the gangplank shouted to relatives that he would rather die trying to get rich, thank you. Within months, 40 ships, some on the verge of being scrapped, had left for Alaska.

More than 100,000 people made for the Klondike—Wyatt Earp, boxing promoter George "Tex" Rickard, and other Western figures chasing a last hurrah, plus teachers, bank tellers, seamen, basketball coaches, and single mothers bringing children. Between spring thaw and autumn freeze prosperous prospectors could sail around Alaska to St. Michael and up the Yukon, but many more debarked at Alaskan panhandle ports Skagway and Dyea, nine miles apart and now jammed with transients staring at the granite mass of the Coast Range, ten to 20 miles inland. Skagway fed the Dead Horse Trail, a 20-mile march to White Pass. From Dyea new arrivals took the Chilkoot Trail, 15 miles to the pass of that name. Once over either pass, a Klondike-bound traveler had 600 miles to go. Traffic was mostly one way. A third pass, the 3,510-foot Chilkat, ran from Haines. However, the trail not only meandered 246 miles but was owned by one Jack Dalton. The Dalton trail's length and the toll the owner charged discouraged its use.

In Skagway, a young opportunist named Jack London described tents, huts, and crude wood structures lining muddy streams functioning as streets along which whores worked in public. Laughter, screams, and gunfire filled the air. Murders occurred nightly. Dead Horse Trail, a



Tenderfeet
For a run at riches, would-be millionaires first had to slog forbidding passes like Chilkoot.

NPS; ALASKA STATE ARCHIVES, SADLIER-OLSEN FAMILY COLLECTION, ASL-P289-217; OPPOSITE PAGE: TOP: HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES; GLENBOW ARCHIVES NA-2437-5

Man with a Pan—and a Nugget
In his right hand, the fellow with the placer mining pan holds a nugget the size of a cookie.

series of switchbacks and so the less punitive route, got its name from the fate of pack animals succumbing to beatings, exhaustion, and falls. That first summer some 40,000 people hoofed it over Chilkoot Pass and then 28 miles to Lake Bennett. Dead Horse Trail took 45 miles getting to the lake, from which the Yukon ran to the sea, its flow punctuated by rapids.

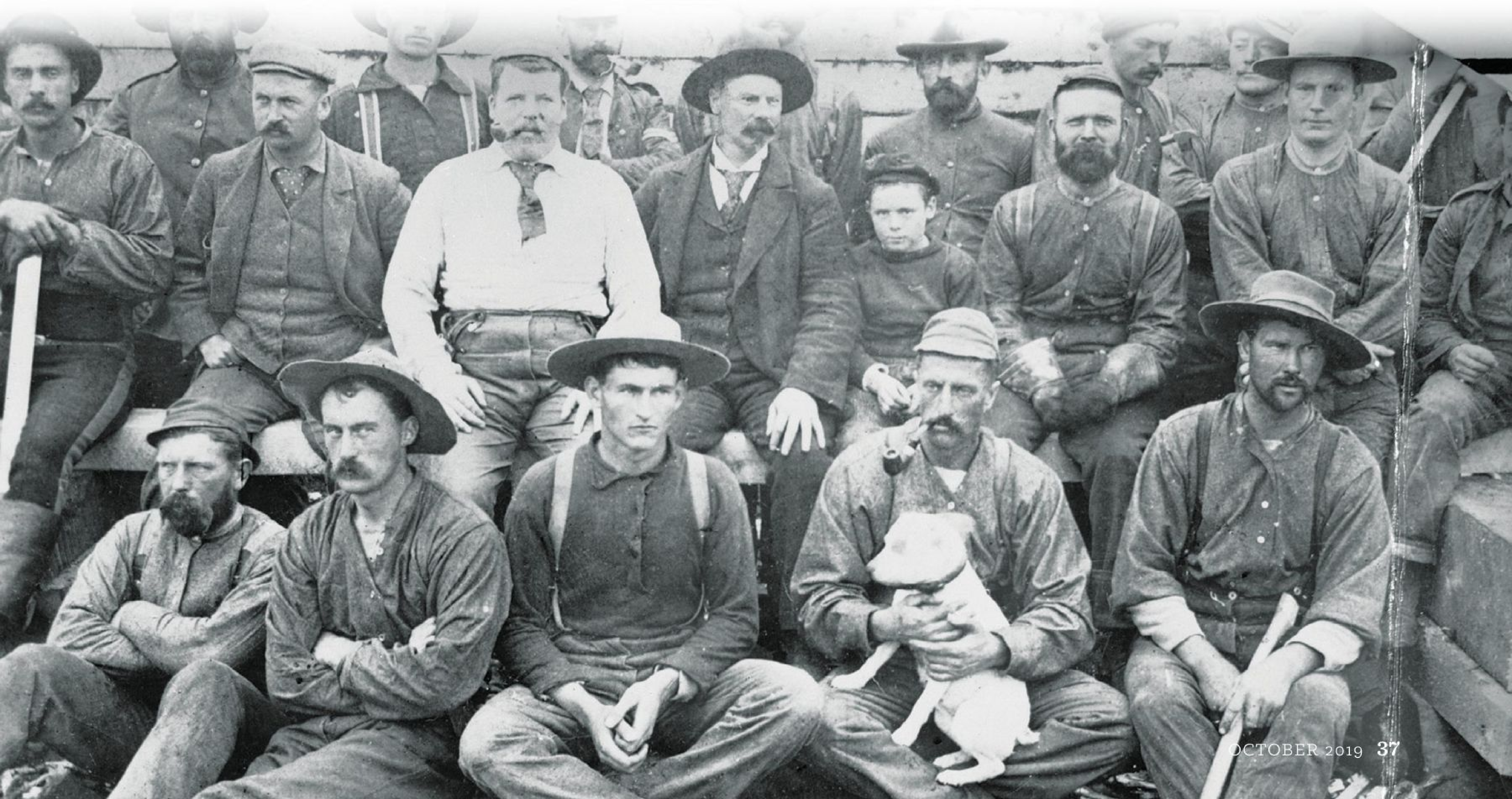
The border between the Alaska Territory and the Yukon Territory of Canada was fluid, especially along the panhandle. Americans claimed Alaska extended to Lake Bennett. British authorities said Skagway, Dyea, and Haines belonged to Canada. Upon routing the French in 1763, Britain had ruled Canada as a cluster of individual colonies until 1867, when the empire encouraged Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia to form the Dominion of Canada. The dominion enjoyed limited domestic authority and had no power in foreign affairs. British Columbia joined the dominion as a province in 1871. Arriving at Dyea from Vancouver in August 1897, Inspector Charles Constantine and 20 men of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police began to enforce Canadian rule along the routes to the Yukon. Constantine had men occupy Skagway, Dyea, and Haines. At Skagway, mounted police commissioner Zachary Taylor Wood, a Canadian citizen and great-grandson and namesake of an American president, had Mounties build a post and fly the Union Jack. By October the Mounties believed they had secured Canada's claims to the area.

The hordes tramping to the Yukon included Captain Patrick Ray and Lieutenant Wilds Richardson of the U.S. Army. Sent by the War Department, the officers, in mufti, were operating separately and clandestinely to learn how much gold was at stake and to gauge British military strength in the area. The two returned to Seattle in September with recommendations for U.S. Army fort locations and a warning, based on hearsay, of incipient starvation conditions in the Klondike. According to Ray, only rationing by storekeepers there was keeping people alive.

He was wrong.

Canada was not prepared for that December's American bombshell. In office since March, President William McKinley faced a gold shortage even though in the Yukon his countrymen were mining gold by the ton. After keeping mum

Defending the Dominion
Members of a Mountie detachment at Fort Constantine, Yukon Territory, 1896.



Keystone View Company,
Manufacturers and Publishers.
9201—"A Claim on the Klondy

Delivering the Goods
Mounties, above, shuttle money from Bennett Lake to Victoria in June 1898. Right, a stereoscope shows a couple at their claim.

about the Army's movements up north, McKinley told Congress on December 6, 1897, that he was ordering the U.S. Army to occupy the Klondike to prevent the starvation alleged in Ray's sketchy report. The president called the expedition a humanitarian mission.

Just after Christmas, U.S. Army Colonel Thomas Anderson landed at Skagway with an advance guard of the 14th Infantry from Vancouver, Washington, to occupy the town. Anderson, confronting six Mounties at their Skagway post, ordered the Union Jack lowered, claiming the bastion was on American soil. The Canadians balked until American soldiers surrounded them. Anderson ordered the Mounties across White Pass to Lake Bennett, claimed by the United States as the border. Mounties could come to Skagway for supplies as long as they were not in uniform. Rather than retreat to Lake Bennett, the Mounties, under orders from headquarters, built a post atop White Pass and another atop Chilkoot Pass.

Fearing an American coup, the dominion government in Ottawa sent Northwest Mounted Police Commissioner Samuel Steele with 196 Mounties in January 1898. Reinforcing the Mountie posts at the passes, Steele sent patrols to identify any "back door" route the American army might take into the Yukon. A force of 18 Mounties went to Pleasant Camp, outside Haines, led by Inspector Arthur Jarvis. To prevent another starving winter in Dawson, Inspector James Walsh required that prospectors traveling through Chilkoot and White passes have 2,000 lbs. of food to get past the checkpoint. The disaster theme, which McKinley already had promoted, captivated the American press. Newspapers ignored the implied threat of American troops seizing Canadian gold fields, instead featuring the need to stop the starvation in Dawson and highlighting orders to the Yukon Field Relief Force to guarantee Canadian sovereignty in the Klondike. Since Canada lacked the military muscle to stop Americans from shipping gold out of the territory, no American feathers were ruffled.

Lake Bennett's shore was now a tent city of 30,000, its inhabitants waiting to ride the thaw downstream to the Klondike. Early spring arrivals reported that in April 1898 the United States had declared war on Spain. In Canada, the headlines were about tensions between the British Empire and the Transvaal Republic of South Africa over gold and the possibility of Canada having to send troops to fight the Boers.

On May 8, 1898, Canada mustered at Ottawa a Yukon Field Force of 203 men, a quarter of the dominion's tiny army. The force traveled to the Pacific Ocean by rail, then sailed north along the Pacific Coast and up the Stikine River near Wrangell, Alaska. At Glenora, British Columbia, Field Force men, in scarlet jackets and white pith helmets, disembarked for the march to the Yukon. Guided by Hudson Bay Company scouts—the company also provided 300 mules for the expedition—the dominion troops hacked through mosquito-infested forests, hauling two Maxim machine guns to reinforce the Mountie positions at Chilkoot and White passes.

FROM TOP: GLENBOW ARCHIVES PD-383-1-47; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

On, You Huskies!
Mushers with a dogsled team pause in a canyon near Pleasant Camp, Alaska, May 1898.

Reluctant to send troops through the Coast Range to confront the Mounties at the passes, the U.S. War Department shipped men to Valdez with orders to follow the 1884 All-American Route. That bogus path's author, William Abercrombie, was in command. He and his troops encountered frustrated prospectors who had tried to follow Abercrombie's fake map. Abercrombie assigned Captain Patrick Ray, the gold rush spy, to go up the Yukon to establish forts should the United States undertake a military incursion into the region. Abercrombie and company spent months hunting a route from Valdez to the Klondike.

Meadville, Pa. St. Louis, Mo.
Copyright, 1898, by B. L. Singley
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On May 29, 1898, the Lake Bennett ice broke up; within 48 hours, more than 7,000 boats and rafts carrying would-be millionaires had put in to ride the Yukon and its rapids to riches. At each stretch of white water, Mounties maintained watch to recover the dead.

The gold rush continued through 1898, gradually displaced from the front pages by the Spanish-American War in Cuba and the Philippines and the standoff between the British and the Boers. These conflicts eased American and Canadian inclinations toward military build-ups along the Yukon. Tensions lessened further when gold strikes at Coldfoot, Hope, and Fairbanks in Alaska redirected prospectors from the Yukon. Commissioner Steele ordered half the Yukon Field Force back to Vancouver, British Columbia.

In 1898-99, as ordered, U.S. Army Captain Ray established forts along the Yukon at Egbert, Gibbon, Circle City, and Rampart, Alaska. In October 1899, Britain declared war on the Transvaal Republic. Scores of Yukon Field Force men eventually fought there. The Canadian/American border remained a concern, as did construction of American military installations in disputed territory, such as Fort William Seward at Haines. That town was claimed by Canada, which was agitating for a border with Alaska that gave the dominion a port to the Yukon at Dyea, Haines, or Skagway. William McKinley, pursuing re-election in 1900 with well-regarded New Yorker Theodore Roosevelt as his running mate, again won the presidency, only to be assassinated in September 1901. Among his emphases as successor, Roosevelt stressed settling the Alaskan border. A commission of three Americans, two Canadians, and a representative of the United Kingdom convened. In 1903, perhaps trying to propitiate the Americans as allies against Germany, the British commissioner aligned with the Americans to establish the border along the Coast Range line formed by the Mountie positions at Chilkoot and White passes. The United States gave up claims to the area around Lake Bennett for a clear title to Haines. The Canadians, deprived of a port at Haines, Skagway, or Dyea, felt betrayed by the mother country. "So long as Canada remains a dependency of the British Crown the present powers that we have are not sufficient for the maintenance of our rights," Canadian Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier told Parliament.

The Klondike Gold Rush generated impressive results. According to Canadian historian Pierre Berton, a claim held by prospector Swiftwater Bill Gates was literally knee-deep in gold. In two hours, Jim Tweed took $4,284 worth of gold; Frank Dinsmore, in a day, tallied $24,489. Albert Lancaster averaged $2,000 a day for eight weeks. Clarence Berry left the Klondike with $1.5 million in gold, before departing setting by his cabin in the Yukon a coffee can filled with nuggets and a bottle of whiskey beside a sign reading, "Help Yourself." Of 100,000 who tried for the Klondike, 4,000 found gold—500 of those enough gold to qualify as millionaires.

Some date the Klondike rush's end to an April 29, 1899, fire in a Dawson dancehall girl's room that spread until it destroyed the town. On the heels of the Dawson blaze came word that at Nome the beach was full of gold dust; nearly overnight, 8,000 people left. Mining, mostly corporate, continues in the Klondike, which between 1896 and 2013 yielded some 14 million ounces, or 437.5 tons, of gold.

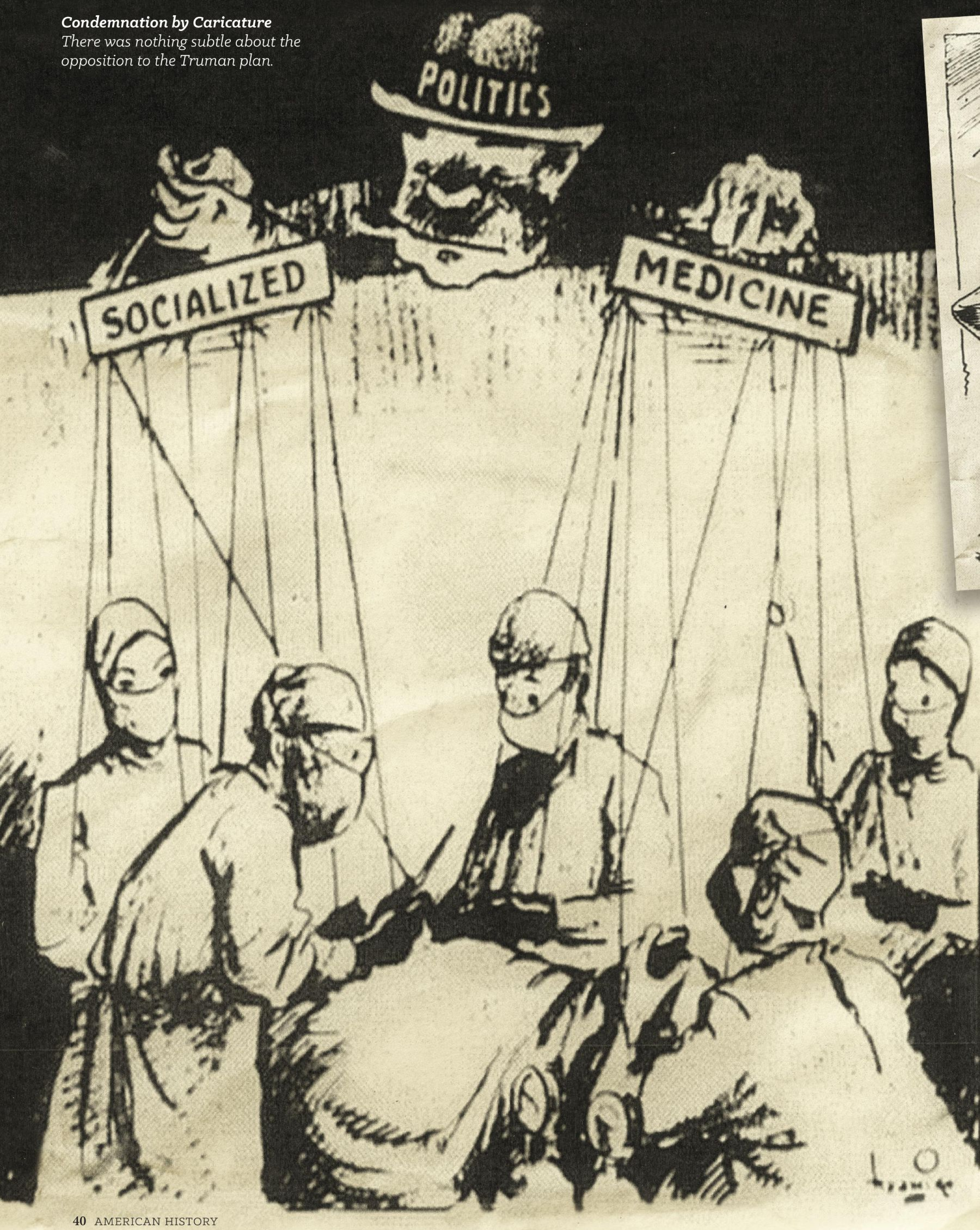
George Carmack, he of the original strike on Rabbit Creek, long since renamed Bonanza Creek, left Kate. Stake in hand, he headed south to Seattle. He remarried. His second wife, Marguerite, put his fortune into real estate. Carmack never got over gold fever, and spent the rest of his years roaming goldfields in the Lower 48, hoping for another mother lode. He was 62 when he died in 1922, working a new claim. ★

Hurry Up and Wait
Travelers traversing Chilkoot Pass had to pass muster at a Canadian customs station.

N.W.M.P. AND CANADIAN CUSTOMS HOUSE
S.E. BROKER

FROM TOP: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; HISTORY AND ART COLLECTION/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Condemnation by Caricature
There was nothing subtle about the opposition to the Truman plan.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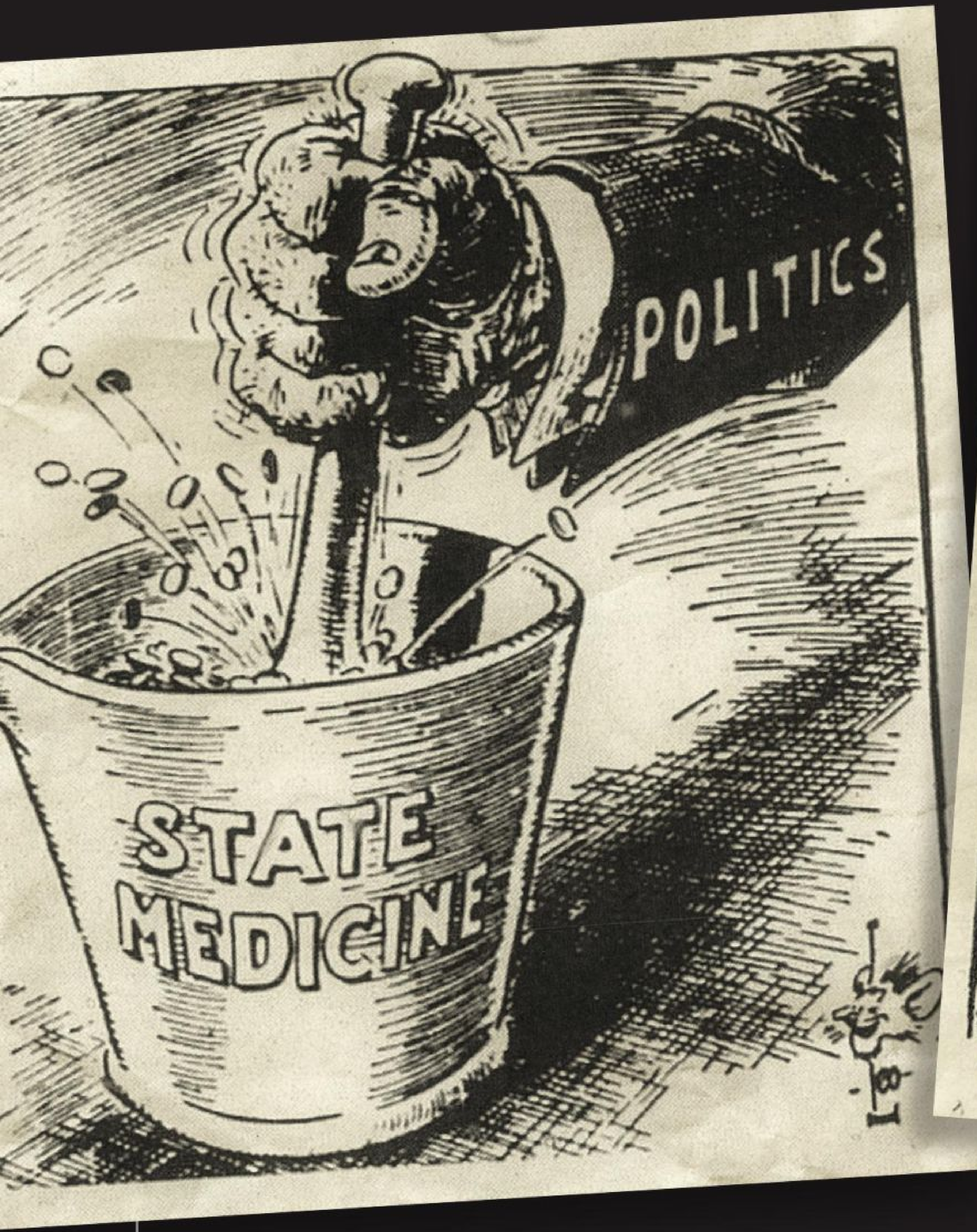
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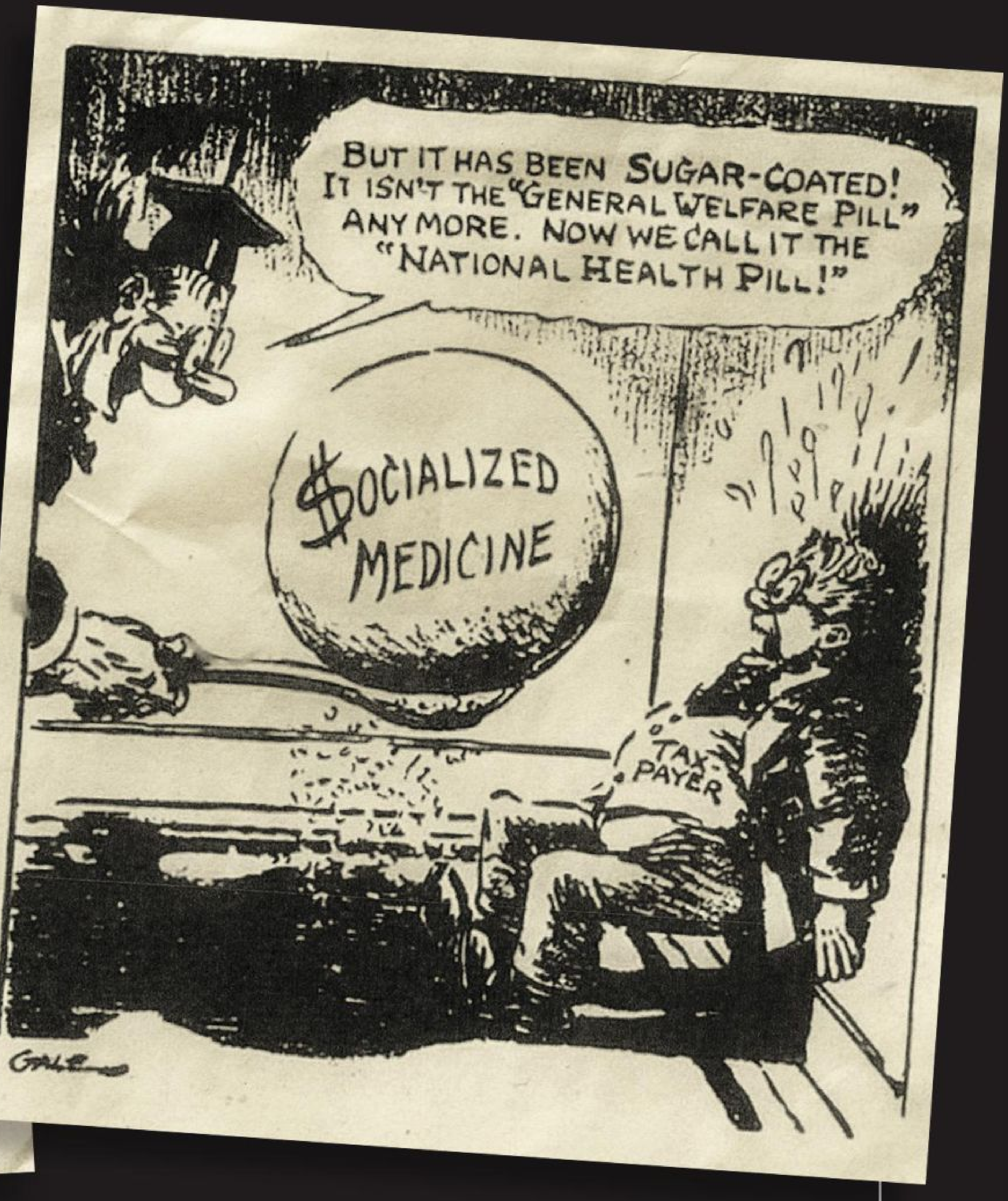

BUT IT HAS BEEN SUGAR-COATED! IT ISN'T THE "GENERAL WELFARE PILL" ANY MORE. NOW WE CALL IT THE "NATIONAL HEALTH PILL!"
$OCIALIZED MEDICINE
TAX PAYER
GALE

Give 'em Healthcare, Harry!

Howls of "socialized medicine" greeted Truman's 1946 try for national health coverage

By Joseph Connor

FROM LEFT: ©THE POLISH NEWS DAILY; ©NEW YORK DAILY NEWS; ©NEW YORK JOURNAL AMERICAN

The American Way of Medicine
In 1942 a country doctor makes a house call in Scott County, Missouri.

The U.S. Senate Labor and Education Committee began its day on April 2, 1946, with a thunderous exchange between pillars of that body over the legislation under discussion.

"It is to my mind the most socialistic measure that this Congress has ever had before it, seriously," Senator Robert A. Taft (R-Ohio) declared.

With equal vehemence, Senator James E. Murray (D-Montana), replied, "Everything that has been attempted to be done for the welfare of the American people has men like you coming along charging it with being communistic."

Taft persisted in decrying the measure as socialistic. Waving a fist, Murray ordered the gentleman from Ohio to "shut up," going so far as to threaten to "call the officers here and have you removed from the room."

As the legislative lions kept at it, their roars resonating in the green and gilt U.S. Capitol hearing room, the Senate momentarily shed its carefully maintained politesse, descending into what a reporter called "a fist-shaking verbal brawl." The indecorous exchange should have been no surprise; Murray's panel was considering a proposal with the power to provoke hysterical reaction, especially since the legislation at hand seemed on the path to success: compulsory national health insurance.

On November 19, 1945, Harry S. Truman had thrown the weight of his office behind such a program, something not even Franklin D. Roosevelt had dared push. It was a daring move for an unelected president who 13 months before had been an obscure senator, but Truman saw the issue as one of fairness. Wealthy Americans

Diehard
Ohio Republican Robert Taft staked out a diamond-hard line against Truman's insurance proposal.

could afford medical care. Poor Americans got charity care. However, Americans in the middle were out on a limb. Serious illness or injury could and did gut family finances; at some point, nearly a quarter of the population had gone into debt to pay medical bills. Americans were not getting the health care they needed, the president said, citing how during World War II pre-induction physicals found five million men medically unfit for military service. Health care would never be affordable for all "unless government is bold enough to do something about it," Truman told Congress.

The president unveiled his insurance plan only seven months after taking the oath of office and three months after Japan's surrender had ended World War II. Under Truman's proposal, a 3 percent federal payroll tax on incomes up to $3,600 would pay for medical, hospital, and dental care for an estimated 110 million Americans, about 80 percent of the population. All eligible persons would be required to enroll. The federal government would pay medical bills in full, with no deductibles or co-payments. If revenue from the payroll deduction did not cover the plan's cost, the government would make up the difference.

Truman knew he faced a fight in Congress. At the merest mention of government health insurance, the influential 126,000-member American Medical Association bristled, and many Republicans wanted to cut, not expand, New Deal social-welfare programs. Still, the odds seemed to favor Truman. His Democrats held comfortable majorities in both houses of Congress. Nearly three-quarters of the public favored national health care. Organized labor, a potent force in a country with more than 14 million unionized workers, backed his proposal.

The window of opportunity for achieving this milestone, however, was small and shrinking. The Republicans, who had been out of power since 1933, were hoping to retake Congress in midterm elections that were less than a year away. In that fleeting interim might reside Truman's best—and perhaps only—chance to enact national health care coverage.

Reformers had been urging such a program in some form for decades. In 1912, Theodore Roosevelt's Bull Moose Party had promised "[t]he protection of home life against the hazards of sickness…through the adoption of a system of social insurance…" Universal care seemed poised to gain traction in late 1932, when the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care, a group of 48 medical professionals and economists, endorsed the principle, and President-elect Roosevelt seemed to agree. Roosevelt voiced hope that the committee's work would lead to affordable care "for those to whom the disaster of illness would mean destitution." Once in office, however, FDR about-faced. Health coverage seemed a logical companion to what was then called old-age insurance. However, in structuring the Social Security Act, Roosevelt avoided any mention of health coverage for fear of scuttling the entire bill. Social Security became law, but when House and Senate members introduced health-insurance bills in 1939 and 1943, Roosevelt pushed neither, and both died in committee.

Truman was a different story. In the 1920s, he had seen hospitals turn away people unable to pay, and he had done something about that. As county executive of Jackson County, Missouri, he had built an 88-bed public hospital. Truman knew that, for most Americans, it was "a real sacrifice to pay ordinary doctor bills," and he wanted to use his presidency to help them.

"We are a rich nation and can afford many things," he told Congress. "But ill-health which can be prevented or cured is one thing we cannot afford." To launch Truman's effort, veteran New Dealers Murray and Senator Robert F. Wagner (D-New York) and their colleague, Representative John Dingell Sr. (D-Michigan), introduced the National Health Act (S. 1606 and H.R. 4730).

Public reaction to the National Health Act was mixed. Some viewed the bill as "a wise and forward-looking extension of the New Deal," *Time* magazine reported, observing that others were "sick & tired of having government do things for folks that they might be doing for themselves." In *The New York Times*, a half-page ad backing the bill listed 198 notable supporters, including former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, RCA president David Sarnoff, and General Electric president Gerard Swope.

Republicans attacked. Taft called the bill pure socialism. House Minority Leader Joseph W. Martin Jr. (R-Massachusetts) accused Truman of "out-New Dealing the New Deal." A vitriolic AMA labeled the legislation's aim the imposition of "socialized medicine." According to the physician trade group, the bill marked "the first step in a plan for general socialization not only of the medical profession, but all professions, business and labor." Morris Fishbein, MD, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*,

Defender
Montana Democrat James Murray went toe to toe against the bill's foes.

OPPOSITE PAGE: FROM TOP: CORBIS HISTORICAL/GETTY IMAGES; HARRIS AND EWING, COURTESY OF HARRY S. TRUMAN LIBRARY; THIS PAGE: HARRIS AND EWING, COURTESY OF HARRY S. TRUMAN LIBRARY

denounced the National Health Act as “the kind of regimentation that led to totalitarianism in Germany and the downfall of that nation.” The National Grange, a farmers’ organization, attacked the concept of compulsory medical insurance for being “as un-American as the Gestapo.”

Growing anti-communist fervor made the phrase “socialized medicine” a damning indictment; supporters of the bill rushed to neutralize the invective. Truman called his plan simple insurance, no different than fire coverage, and warned Americans not to be “frightened off from health insurance because some people have misnamed it.” Co-sponsor Wagner accused opponents of stretching the term “socialism” to cover anything “to which the American Medical Association leadership is opposed.” Dingell said critics who insisted on labeling the plan socialism were “either woefully ignorant or inexcusably rigid in their stand-pat attitude.”

Those cries of socialism centered on the program’s compulsory structure. All eligible persons would have to enroll. Payroll deductions from healthy enrollees would cover care for the sick and injured. To Senator Claude Pepper (D-Florida), this was no more socialistic than requiring a bachelor to pay property taxes to support his jurisdiction’s local school district. The mandate arose out of mathematical necessity, supporters said. If the plan were voluntary, those likeliest to enroll would be people with pre-existing health conditions and those at the greatest risk for illness, the category insurers called “incipient hospital cases.” Healthy Americans might roll the dice and opt out. Insuring too many sick people and not enough healthy people would trap the program in a financial quagmire.

“SOCIALIZED MEDICINE” WAS NOTHING NEW IN THE UNITED STATES. THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE HAD ITS ROOTS IN A 1798 TAX ON MERCHANT SEAMEN’S WAGES.

What opponents savaged as “socialized medicine” was nothing new in the United States. In 1798, concerned about the well-being of merchant seamen in a young nation dependent on maritime commerce, Congress passed and President John Adams signed into law the Seaman’s Act. This statute assessed each sailor a mandatory payroll tax of 20 cents per month. The funds went to build government hospitals and hire doctors to care for sick and injured seamen. Enacted on July 16, 1798, this program and its Marine Hospital Service functioned as intended for many years, in 1912 becoming the U.S. Public Health Service.

At 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 2, 1946, the Senate Education and Labor Committee opened hearings on Truman’s health care plan. Within moments, Murray, 69, and Taft, 56, were exchanging verbal volleys. Murray, a liberal stalwart, was known for having a temper. Second in seniority to ranking minority committee member Senator Robert M. LaFollette Jr. (R-Wisconsin), the conservative Taft was the panel’s most prominent Republican. A deep-dyed nemesis of social welfare programs, Taft behaved, *The New York Times* wrote, as if he were on “a mission so right and so urgent that only the stupid or the stubborn would refuse to see it in the same way.” Each man had a personal stake. Murray was among the health insurance bill’s sponsors. Taft was eyeing the 1948 GOP presidential nomination.

Murray called Taft’s accusations of socialism “a grandstand play” and “slander,” but his grandstanding vow to eject Taft was more theater than threat. The only security staff present was one elderly U.S. Capitol police officer.

“You are so self-opinionated, and you think that you are so important that you can come into this meeting and disrupt it,” Murray snapped at Taft.

“Mr. Chairman, I am not going to attend any more meetings of your committee,” the red-faced Republican retorted. “We are through.”

Accusing Murray of employing the panel’s hearings as a “propaganda machine,” Taft, briefcase in hand, stormed out. The proceedings continued, but Taft’s outburst demonstrated that the Republicans intended to offer last-ditch resistance to government health insurance.

Organized medicine opposed the Truman bill by deploying a deep-pocketed and masterful public-relations offensive. *Showdown on Political Medicine*, a 24-page AMA-sponsored brochure, painted compulsory national health insurance as “an unusual crisis of great peril,” casting the National Health Act as a “strictly totalitarian” measure embodying “the most vicious and dangerous aspects of socialized medicine.” Institution of national health insurance coverage, the AMA warned, would “establish a core of collectivist control under which freedom of enterprise in any form could not long survive.”

Mailed in bulk to doctors and druggists, *Showdown* had broad reach. Physicians displayed the brochure and distributed copies to patients, sometimes mailing them with invoices. Pharmacists did the same. To reinforce the messages, the AMA ran newspaper ads blasting the Truman proposal. The campaign was officially the work of the National Physicians Committee, which bill supporters called a front set up by the AMA to protect its tax-exempt status by insulating the parent group against complaints of lobbying. A more extreme organization, the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons, threatened to boycott any national health insurance program. Organized medicine’s blitz was, New York daily *PM* editorialized, a “$300,000-a-year smear campaign.”

Opposition among doctors was not monolithic, however. AMA member Ernst P. Boas, MD, testified in favor of the Truman bill, accusing the AMA of “serving as a guild battling to retain the economic privileges of the medical profession." Senator Murray chided doctors balking at the proposal as "more interested in high-fee luxury practice than in extending medical care for the masses of our people." Concern over doctors' income puzzled the Rev. Alphonse Schwitalla, president of the Catholic Hospital Association. "This is the first time in the history of the United States that people are beginning to worry about the poor doctor," he said. "Up to now, it has always been the thought that the doctor will get the last benefit off the dead person's eyes, and he won't give you a death certificate until your bill is paid." Whatever physicians' motives might have been, income constituted a legitimate concern. Truman's plan was murky on how and how much the insurance program would pay participating doctors.

Though the powerhouse AMA implacably opposed the bill, smaller physician groups backed Truman's effort. These entities included the 1,000-member Physicians Forum, the 1,500-member Committee of Physicians for the Improvement of Medical Care, and the National Medical Association, representing several thousand African-American doctors. A Seattle MD wrote to the committee to voice support, but anonymously, because if he gave his name, he said, "retributive measures in one form or another would surely be my lot." He signed his comments "A Doctor Ashamed of Doctors."

All sides were in agreement that for many Americans medical bills were a strain. Health care costs had risen 15.1 percent since 1941. Both the Republicans and the AMA offered alternatives to Truman's plan. Taft sponsored a bill—S. 2143—that would give the states $230 million to pay for care—but only for the very poor. Labor recoiled at a means test. "It is hard enough to be poor without being required to prove it if your kids get sick," said George F. Addes, secretary-treasurer of the United Auto Workers. Taft's bill went nowhere.

The AMA, portraying government involvement in health care as unalloyedly evil, pushed for voluntary private insurance, such as the nonprofit Blue Cross plans, relative newcomers that had arisen almost as a fluke. In 1929, Baylor University Hospital in Dallas, Texas, was in bad financial shape, partly because so many hospital bills were going unpaid.

To stop the fiscal hemorrhage, the facility hired administrator Justin Ford Kimball. To boost Baylor's cash reserves, Kimball, 56, devised a system of prepaid insurance. For 50 cents per month paid in advance directly to the hospital, the plan guaranteed enrollees 21 days per year of inpatient care that the Baylor facility at no additional cost. To make this structure work, Kimball needed a critical mass of subscribers, so he approached the Dallas school system. By December 1929, 1,356 Dallas teachers—more than three-quarters of the district's educators—had signed up.

One was Alma Dickson, a speech and drama teacher at John H. Reagan Elementary School. Only days after her coverage took effect, Dickson, 49, broke an ankle. She had her fracture set at Baylor; the Kimball plan paid her bill. Seeking more enrollees, Kimball pitched his program to the *Dallas Morning News*. First to sign up at the daily was Marion Snyder, 23, a clerk in the paper's morgue. Within 24 hours, Snyder came down with acute appendicitis. She was rushed to Baylor's emergency room. When the Kimball plan paid her bill, the entire *News* staff enrolled. By 1934, the Kimball plan was serving 408 employee groups and 23,000 members in Texas. With the Depression tearing at hospitals, enthusiasm for the arrangement spread to other states, which set in motion their own independent plans. Wanting to develop a brand, a Baylor-style plan in Minnesota settled on a blue cross as a symbol. Other plans adopted the emblem. By 1946, the Blue Cross system was operating in 43 states and covering 21.5 million people, about 15 percent of the population.

But Blue Cross was no cure-all. The plan covered inpatient costs, not doctor bills, a serious shortcoming as antibiotic drugs and other advances increasingly shifted care from hospitals to doctors' offices. Only members of a participating employee group could enroll. Geographically, coverage

Advocate
Former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt was among the bill's supporters.

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

They Call Me Mister Blues
In 1929 Justin Ford Kimball created the prototype for Blue Cross-Blue Shield.

THE 1946 REPUBLICAN TRIUMPH ON CAPITOL HILL RENDERED CONGRESS A NEAR-INVINCIBLE DEATH TRAP FOR NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE.

was spotty, and in 10 states, Blue Cross plans insured less than 5 percent of the population. Plans that covered physician care, eventually known as Blue Shield, were in their infancy, insuring only 250,000 people.

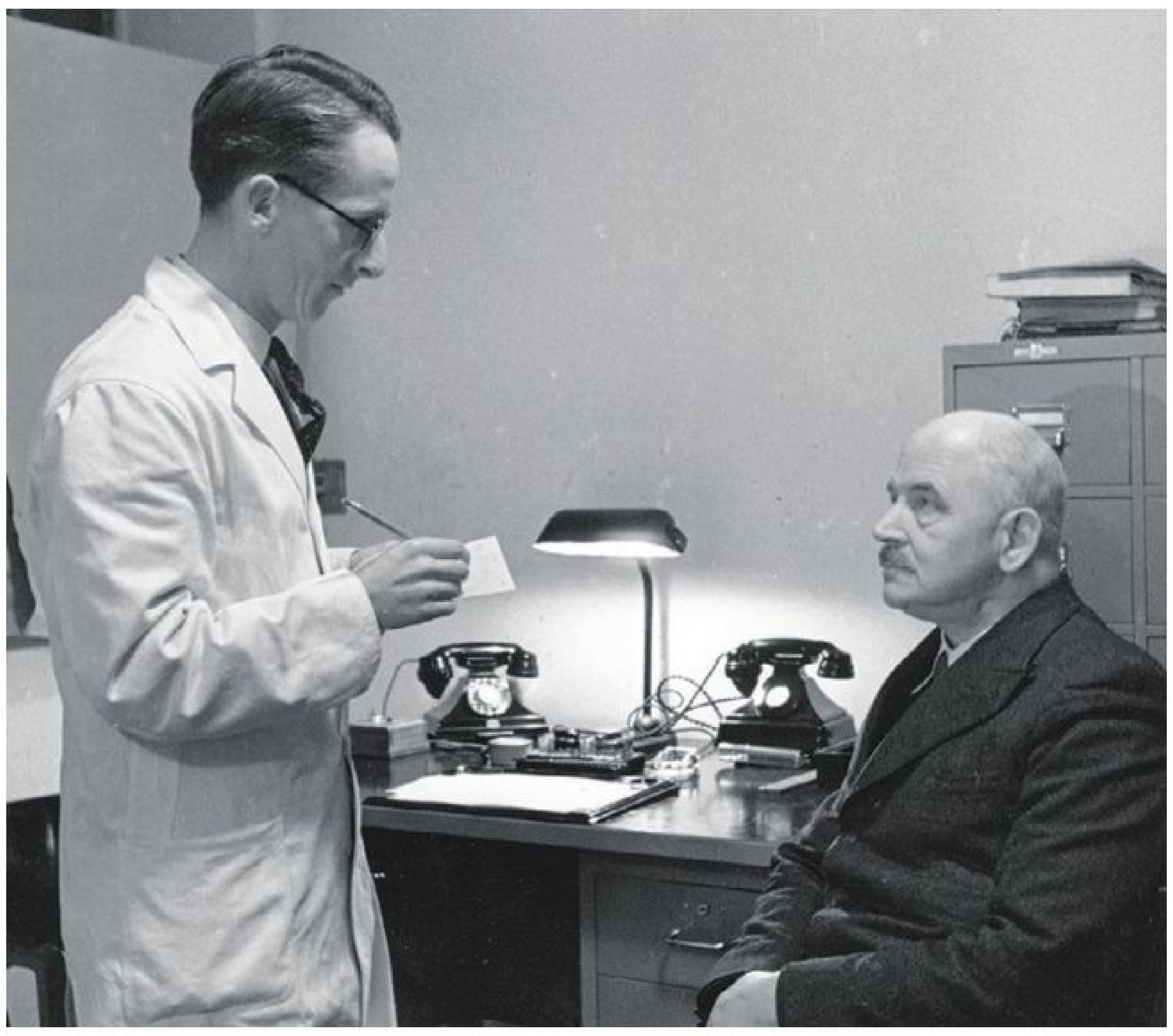
As the Senate hearings ground on through May and June, the Truman proposal's cost became a serious issue. The bill stipulated that the government would pay the difference between the revenue obtained through payroll deductions and the plan's actual cost—and no one knew that cost. Social Security Board Chairman Arthur J. Altmeyer estimated the plan's cost at $3 billion yearly, with payroll deductions falling $500 million short. Health care economist Elizabeth W. Wilson testified that the plan would cost considerably more, leaving taxpayers on the hook. There was a crucial unknown: if cost was discouraging people from seeking medical care, would having supposedly "free" care encourage hordes to seek treatment? Truman administration budget director Harold D. Smith conceded there was "no adequate control against the contingency of runaway costs resulting from excessive services…"

The president's plan was in trouble. Still acclimating to Oval Office life, the usually combative Truman was strangely passive. He gave no fireside chats and embarked on no nationwide speaking tour to rally support, and his plan never captured the public's attention. A May 1946 Gallup poll showed that while the majority of Americans favored national health insurance, less than 40 percent had heard of the pending bill. Support in Truman's own party wavered. In an anonymous Associated Press poll of Congress, only 38 of 63 responding Democrats stood firmly in Truman's corner. Organized labor was Truman's ace in the hole, but unions were distracted from putting their full might behind the bill by big strikes during 1946. In January, 200,000 electrical workers struck. That month, 750,000 steel workers walked off the job, threatening a cascade of industry shutdowns. In April, 400,000 coal miners struck. When 250,000 railroad workers did so in May, paralyzing a nation deeply dependent on rail, Truman angered labor leaders by threatening to draft strikers into the U.S. Army.

The Education and Labor Committee still had hearings scheduled, but the congressional election recess was near, another factor siphoning time and urgency from the bill's progress.

That November, all House seats and a third of Senate seats were up for grabs, and Congress was to adjourn on August 2 so members could campaign. The National Health Act, *The New York Times* wrote, was "loaded with too much controversy for its sponsors to expect it to reach a voting stage before the election year adjournment begins." On July 10, 1946, Murray canceled further hearings, informing scheduled witnesses they would not have to appear. Supporters vowed to renew the fight in 1947, but the moment had passed.

The 1946 elections were a disaster for Democrats. Republicans, campaigning on the slogan "Had Enough?", gained 13 seats in the Senate and 56 in the House to take control of both houses, making Congress a death trap for national health insurance. That skew remained even after November 1948, when Truman came from behind to win election and the Democrats regained control of Congress. The Cold War made the socialized-medicine label more damning than



No Simple Treatment
The problem of how to guarantee every American health coverage has continued to defy solution.

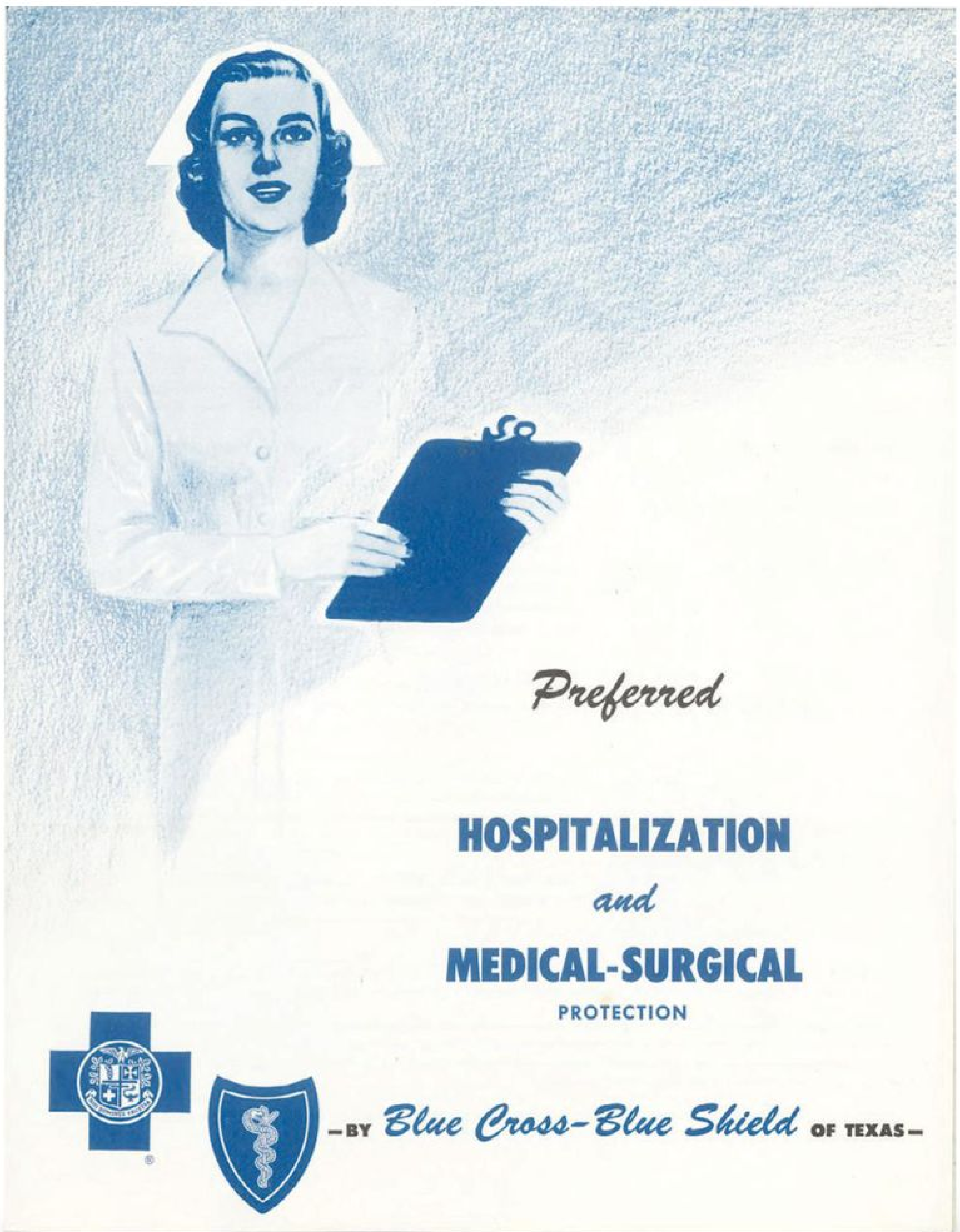
TOP: BCBS ARCHIVES; BOTTOM: PICTUREPOST/GETTY IMAGES

ever. The AMA trumpeted a quote attributed to Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin calling socialized medicine "the keystone to the arch of the Socialist State." Senator Murray had the Library of Congress fact-check the ostensible quote, which was found to be bogus. Health insurance bills floated in 1947 and in 1949 were dead on arrival.

In 1950, with the Korean War under way, Truman waved the white flag in regard to health insurance. That October, Representative Dingell, a sponsor of health care bills since 1943, wrote to the president complaining about organized medicine's obduracy.

"At the proper time we will take the starch out of them," Truman wrote back. "I don't think the time is exactly right to do that." The time never did become right for Truman. He later called his insurance plan's demise the greatest disappointment of his presidency, remarking that he never could understand "all the fuss some people make about government wanting to do something to improve and protect the health of the people."

Presidents since have enacted ambitious schemes—Lyndon B. Johnson with Medicare in 1965 and Barack Obama with the Affordable Care Act in 2010—but none has proffered a plan as bold or far-reaching as the program Truman did. Universal health care remains a wedge issue, to some a dream, to others an anathema—with no more consensus than in 1946 and no answer in sight. ★



Preferred

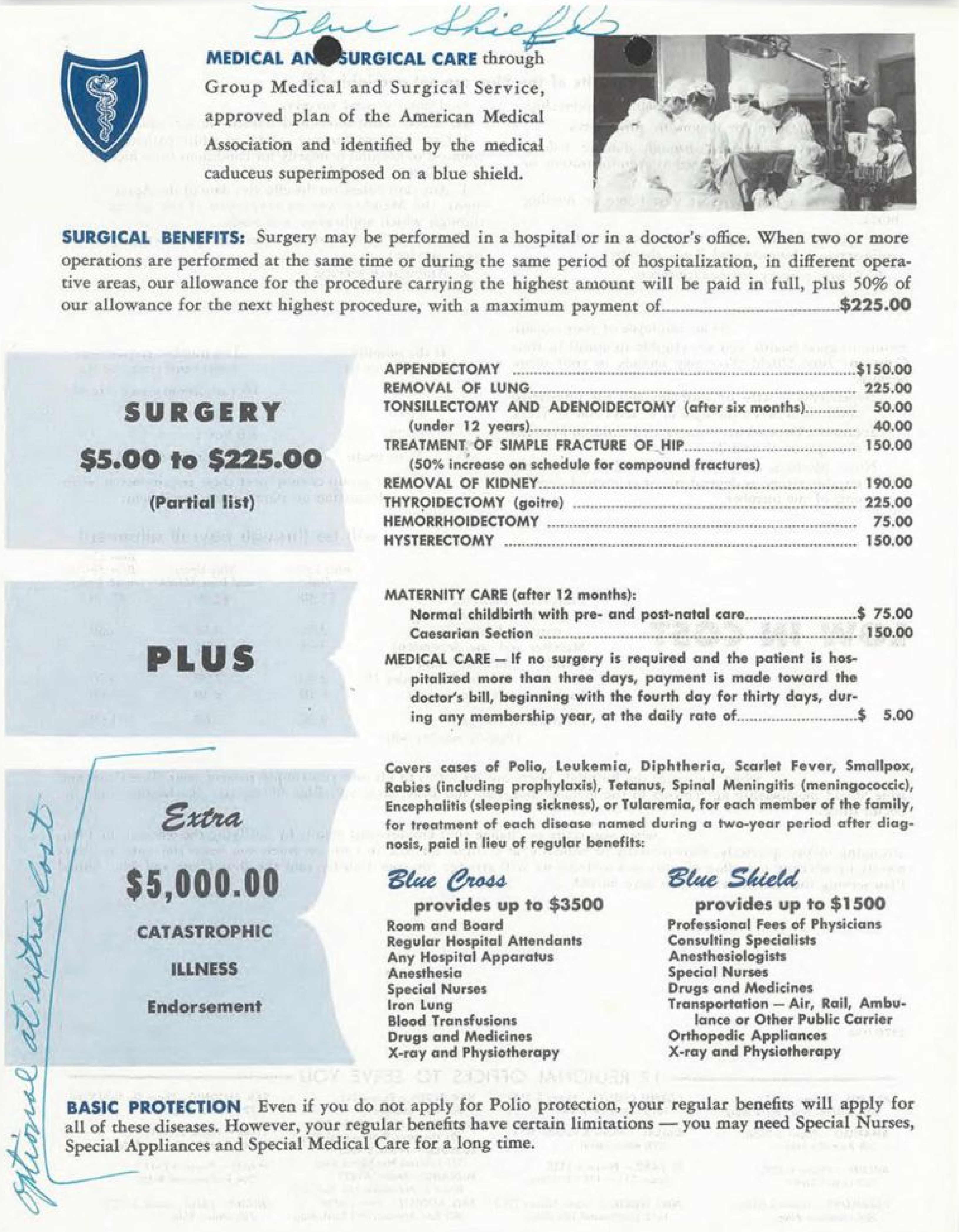
HOSPITALIZATION

and

MEDICAL-SURGICAL

PROTECTION

—BY Blue Cross-Blue Shield OF TEXAS—



Blue Shield

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL CARE through Group Medical and Surgical Service, approved plan of the American Medical Association and identified by the medical caduceus superimposed on a blue shield.

SURGICAL BENEFITS: Surgery may be performed in a hospital or in a doctor's office. When two or more operations are performed at the same time or during the same period of hospitalization, in different operative areas, our allowance for the procedure carrying the highest amount will be paid in full, plus 50% of our allowance for the next highest procedure, with a maximum payment of $225.00

SURGERY

$5.00 to $225.00

(Partial list)

APPENDECTOMY	$150.00
REMOVAL OF LUNG	225.00
TONSILLECTOMY AND ADENOIDECTOMY (after six months)	50.00
(under 12 years)	40.00
TREATMENT OF SIMPLE FRACTURE OF HIP (50% increase on schedule for compound fractures)	150.00
REMOVAL OF KIDNEY	190.00
THYROIDECTOMY (goitre)	225.00
HEMORRHOIDECTOMY	75.00
HYSTERECTOMY	150.00

PLUS

MATERNITY CARE (after 12 months):

Normal childbirth with pre- and post-natal care	$ 75.00
Caesarian Section	150.00

MEDICAL CARE — If no surgery is required and the patient is hospitalized more than three days, payment is made toward the doctor's bill, beginning with the fourth day for thirty days, during any membership year, at the daily rate of .... $ 5.00

Optional at extra cost

Extra

$5,000.00

CATASTROPHIC ILLNESS Endorsement

Covers cases of Polio, Leukemia, Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Smallpox, Rabies (including prophylaxis), Tetanus, Spinal Meningitis (meningococcic), Encephalitis (sleeping sickness), or Tularemia, for each member of the family, for treatment of each disease named during a two-year period after diagnosis, paid in lieu of regular benefits:

Blue Cross provides up to $3500	*Blue Shield* provides up to $1500
Room and Board	Professional Fees of Physicians
Regular Hospital Attendants	Consulting Specialists
Any Hospital Apparatus	Anesthesiologists
Anesthesia	Special Nurses
Special Nurses	Drugs and Medicines
Iron Lung	Transportation — Air, Rail, Ambulance or Other Public Carrier
Blood Transfusions	Orthopedic Appliances
Drugs and Medicines	X-ray and Physiotherapy
X-ray and Physiotherapy	

BASIC PROTECTION Even if you do not apply for Polio protection, your regular benefits will apply for all of these diseases. However, your regular benefits have certain limitations — you may need Special Nurses, Special Appliances and Special Medical Care for a long time.

Those Were the Days

Sums in a 1950s Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Texas brochure illustrate the shocking growth in costs.

Small Consolation

Surgeon General Thomas Parran, Civil Service Commissioner Harry Mitchell, and Federal Security Administrator Watson Miller watch President Truman sign a 1946 bill providing for health programs for federal employees.

LEFT: BCBS ARCHIVES (2); RIGHT: COPYRIGHT UNKNOWN, COURTESY OF HARRY S. TRUMAN LIBRARY

Off the Rails

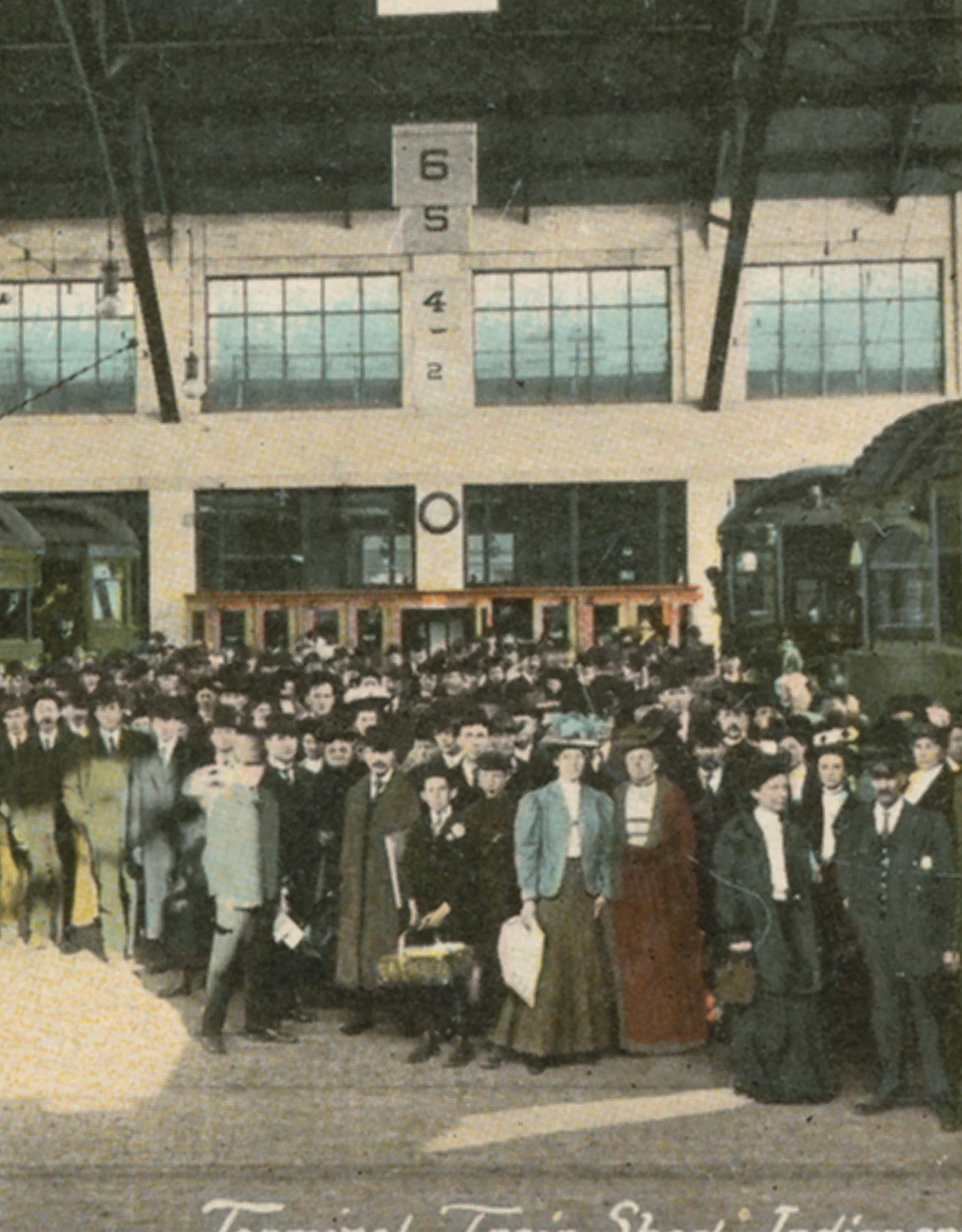
When mass transit was on the rise, interurban rail enjoyed a brief, brilliant heyday

By Raanan Geberer

INDIANAPOLIS
LOCAL
CRAWFORDSVILLE

Hub City
In 1904, an overflow of travelers beneath the building's train shed illustrates the extent to which Indianapolis Traction Terminal figured in transport all around Indiana.

INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P0391; BASS PHOTO COLLECTION, INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Terminal Train Shed, Indianapo

PHILADELPHIA & WESTERN
204

Like a Bullet
In a 1932 image, Margaret Bourke-White frames a Philadelphia & Western car against a dramatic incline.

On weekdays in the 1910s, the waiting room at the Indianapolis Traction Terminal welcomed hundreds of travelers—men wearing straw boaters or derbies, women in wide-brimmed hats and ankle-length skirts—debarking from or waiting to board trains to and from South Bend and Terre Haute, Indiana, Columbus, Ohio, and elsewhere. At the adjoining train shed, 500 trains, operated by 12 interurban railway lines, came and went daily, carrying some seven million passengers a year. Indianapolis Traction was the nation's largest interurban terminal. By 1941, the trains were gone. The building became a bus terminal, was shuttered in 1968, and in 1972 was torn down—a capsule history of American interurban electric rail. The site of the interurban terminal, demolished in 1972, now is the location of the Hilton Indianapolis.

"Interurban" means "between cities," but as a means of transit the definition is looser. Interurbans were hybrids of the city streetcar line and the suburban commuter railroad as those transportation modes existed before the automobile. Streetcars mostly stayed within a city's limits, but interurbans lived up literally to their Latinate name, connecting municipalities and bringing mass transit to small-town and rural America. Like a streetcar, an interurban usually got power supplied by overhead electric wires fed by a coal- or oil-fired power plant. The wires propelled one- or two-car trains.

Electric traction—transport systems, tracked and not, that run on electricity—made possible both the interurban and the streetcar, which replaced railcars drawn by horses and sometimes by cable. As early as the 1830s, inventors were using batteries to power railcars, but those systems were slow and ran only short distances. In the early 1880s, Baltimorean Leo Daft introduced a more reliable and effective system powered by overhead wire. In 1888 former naval officer Frank Sprague, of Richmond, Virginia, pioneered improvements, such as a non-sparking electric motor mounted on the car's underside and powered by a spring-laden pole, or trolley, connecting to an overhead wire by means of a rotating wheel. Within a year of Richmond installing trolleys, more than 100 cities were developing electric streetcar systems.

A seven-mile interurban line connecting Newark and Granville, Ohio, built in 1889, and a 13-mile line between Portland and Oregon City, Oregon, built in 1893, each has been called the first true interurban. But the trend's genuine beginning, according to *The Electric Interurban Railways in America* by George Hilton and John Due, dates to 1895, when Henry Everett and Edward Moore built the Akron, Bedford and

ARCHIVE FARMS INC./ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Cleveland Railroad. The two, veterans of other public utility projects, used profits from their successful Akron venture to form a syndicate that built interurbans in Ohio, Michigan, and Canada. By 1900, the Everett-Moore Syndicate controlled more than 500 miles of track, and an interurban boom, interrupted slightly by economic panics in 1903 and 1907, was on. By 1917, interurban operators had laid 18,000 miles of track around the United States.

Though rare in the impoverished and mostly rural Deep South, lines proliferated elsewhere, especially in the heartland. "In the Midwest, you had many large population centers like Cleveland, Toledo, and Mansfield, and they were spread out over a wide distance and needed to be connected," explained Jeffrey Kraemer, an electric traction researcher in North Carolina. "You had lots of flat land, which was easy to grade. And there were lots of industries." Industrial customers used interurbans to haul freight, whether raw materials or finished products.

Operators financed construction by selling stocks or bonds to utilities, bankers, industrialists, politicians, developers, and individual investors. "When the Texas Electric was being built, its salesmen approached banks up and down the line and asked them to buy stock," said Robert Haynes, curator with the Interurban Museum in Plano, Texas. "Most did, since the interurban was the 'new thing.' Some even required their employees to buy stock, too."

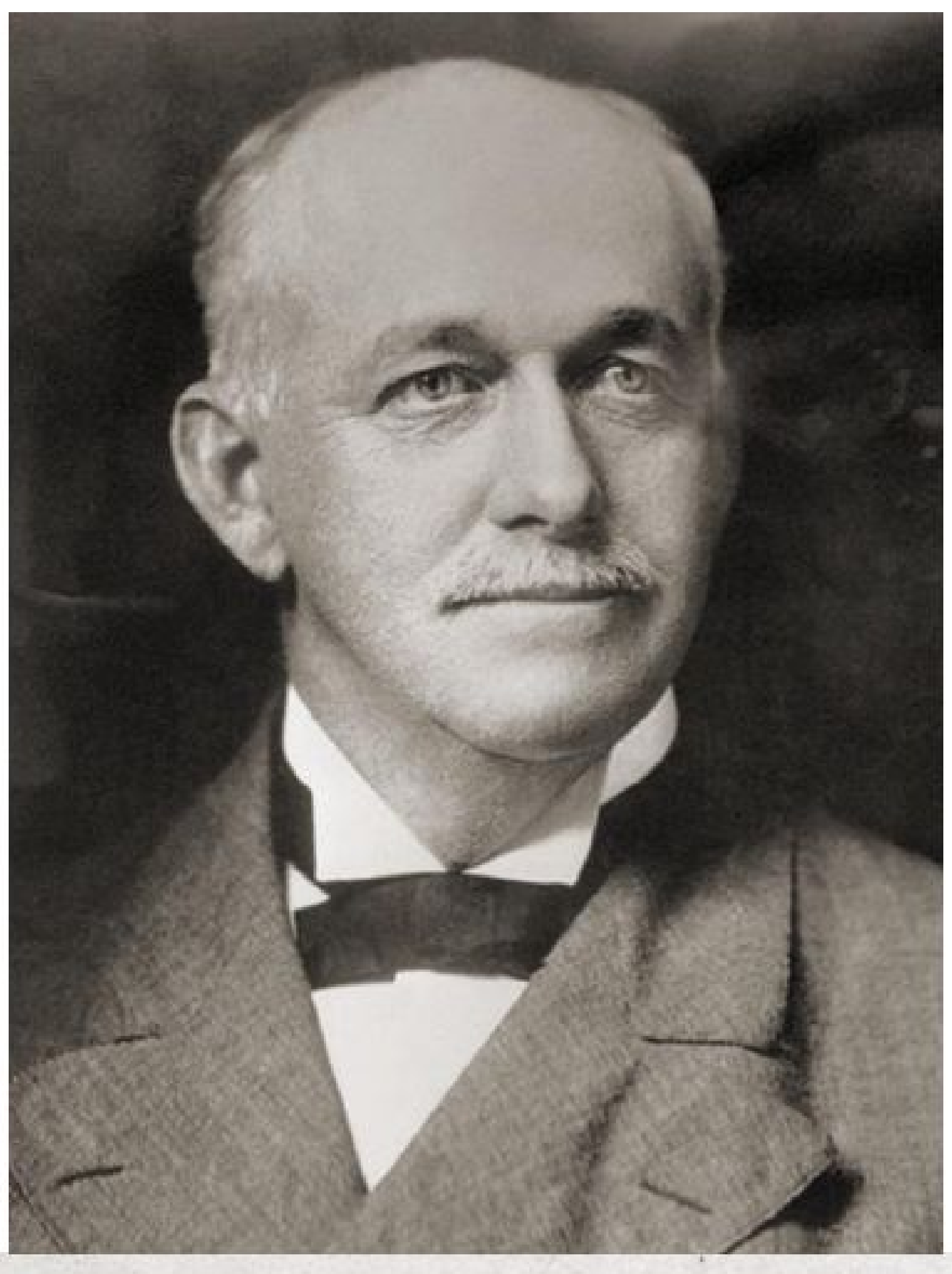
The biggest system was the Pacific Electric Railway. In the 1910s and '20s, that line had more than 1,000 miles of track. "It connected Los Angeles with Long Beach, Venice, San Bernardino, Santa Ana, cities all over southern California," said Harvey Laner, archivist for the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris, California. In 1914, according to *The Interurban Era* by William Middleton, 1,626 trains entered or left Los Angeles every day over Pacific Electric lines. The Pacific Electric was the creation of rail tycoon, developer and art collector Henry R. Huntington, nephew of Colin Huntington, a founder of the Southern Pacific. The younger man, who had apprenticed under his uncle for years before going out on his own, saw real estate and rails as intertwined—wherever he built his lines, he built houses, and vice versa. His Huntington Beach Company founded the Orange County town of that name in 1909. Huntington helped introduce surfing to California by bringing Hawaiian board ace George Freeth to Redondo Beach in 1907. He also founded the art musem bearing his name. In 1898, he purchased and built up the Los Angeles Railway, a streetcar line whose "Yellow Cars" would share inner-city tracks with the Pacific Electric's "Red Cars."

In 1901, Huntington and banker Isaias Hellman founded the Pacific Electric. The first line, to Long Beach, opened in 1902, followed by lines to Newport, Santa Ana, Pasadena, and elsewhere. Most interurban lines had only one track, but many Pacific Electric's lines had two sets, and two segments were four-tracked—two for locals, two for express trains. The Pacific Electric largely spurred the growth of suburban Los Angeles.

Nationwide, if interurbans had a rival, it was the railroad. Electric interurbans were faster and cleaner than wood- and coal-powered steam trains belching smoke and cinders. At a rural hamlet the train might stop a few times a day. Interurbans passed by at least hourly. Light, self-propelled interurban cars offered flexibility. "Steam trains took a long time to start up and to slow down, but an interurban could stop on a dime," said Kraemer.

In locales where interurban lines paralleled steam railroads, interurbans poached customers with slogans like "No Dust, No Dirt, No Smoke, No Cinders." Trying to keep the new breed from growing, railroads often barred interurban freight from their tracks or forbade grade-level crossings, forcing interurban operators to build costly bridges.

Sometimes conflict broke into the open, as in 1907's "Battle of the Bee Farm" in northern



Train Time
Henry Huntington pioneered interurban service in Los Angeles. Below, passengers in Atlanta, Indiana, and Sandusky, Ohio

STATE
WARNERS
CEDAR POINT
RESTAURANT
DRUGS
DENTIST
ROSINO
TERS

UNITED STATES EXPRESS CO.
ATLANTA
Indiana State Fair 6-10
270
LOGANSPORT LIMITED INDIANAPOLIS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES; INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BASS PHOTO COLLECTION; INDIANA HISTORICAL COLLECTION; COURTESY OF THE OHIO HISTORY CONNECTION

Commuting by Rail for Fun and Uplift
Left, comic Harold Lloyd feels the crush in 1924's Girl Shy. *Wilbur and Orville Wright rode trains to work outside Dayton, Ohio.*

California. The Northern Electric Railway and rail tycoon George Gould's Western Pacific Railroad each were building lines to Sacramento from Chico in northern California. The routes crossed near an apiary in Marysville, California. According to Middleton, railroad men reached Marysville first, quickly caught an interurban's track gang that ripped up the just-laid Western Pacific track and put down tracks serving the interurban line. The apiary is still around.

Once Pacific Electric began operating, Southern Pacific president E.H. Harriman applied his influence with regulators to harry Huntington. In 1903, following a bidding war, Huntington made Harriman a partner in exchange for several benefits, including rights to the key Sixth Street rail franchise in Los Angeles. Hellman sold his shares in 1904. Harriman died in 1909. After more disputes, the railroad bought out Huntington in exchange for total control of local Yellow Cars. In 1911, now owning several Los Angeles-area electric rail lines, the Southern Pacific merged them with Pacific Electric.

The expanded Pacific Electric—motto: "From the Mountains to the Sea"—had four sectors. The Northern District served the San Gabriel Valley. The Western District ran west of the city center in such areas as Hollywood, Beverly Hills, and Santa Monica. The Southern District reached Long Beach, Newport Beach, San Pedro, and other shore towns. The Eastern District, created a few years later, included San Bernardino, Redlands and Pomona. In 1917, an elevated terminal opened downtown at Sixth and Main streets. In 1925, an underground subway terminal opened on South Hill Street, connected by subway to surface tracks.

As most interurbans did, the Pacific Electric (P&E) generally ran on tracks installed at street level, often sharing rails with local streetcars. In rural areas, interurban rights-of-way typically paralleled roads, offering operators a chance to pick up speed on straightaways. Interurban cars averaged 55 to 60 feet in length; streetcars were about 45 feet. Interurbans usually maintained smoking and non-smoking sections. Texas Electric had segregated women's sections to separate female passengers from commuting oilfield roughnecks, according to Haynes of the Interurban Museum.

Interurban passengers were diverse: commuters, door-to-door salesmen, students, couples on dates, farmers' wives headed for town to shop, farmers on buying trips. For special events like state fairs, big sports games, college homecomings, and theatrical presentations, interurbans ran excursion cars with wood paneling, wicker or plush seats, and perhaps a buffet with a waiter serving coffee. Lehigh Valley Transit Company produced "Honeymooning at the Delaware Water Gap," promoting that popular Pennsylvania resort area. Booklets like "New England by Trolley," published in 1909, offered travel advice. In 1904, aviation pioneers Orville and Wilbur Wright brought their prototype biplane from Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, to a location an hour outside Dayton, Ohio. The Wrights commuted eight miles between their bicycle shop and makeshift airfield aboard the Dayton, Springfield, and Urbana interurban line.

Pacific Electric excursion service included the narrow-gauge Alpine Division, which ran up and down snow-capped Mount Lowe in the San Gabriel Mountains. The day-long Balloon Route, pitched as "101 miles for 100 cents," which the P&E inherited from the rival Los Angeles-Pacific when it absorbed that line, took tourists around greater Los Angeles. Special cars ran to Santa Anita racetrack and to the Tournament of Roses in Pasadena.

To boost Pacific Electric ridership, in 1909 Huntington built the Redondo Beach Plunge, billing it as the world's largest heated saltwater pool. Fed by the Pacific, the Plunge was popular for years. Attendance declined in the 1930s, and the watery attraction closed in 1941.

On interurbans throughout the U.S., excursion cars were available for rent to groups like Elks Club chapters and other fraternal bodies, school field trips, women's clubs, and business organizations. "The Ku Klux Klan rented cars on the Texas Electric," said Haynes. "They didn't put their robes on until they left the car."

PHOTO BY PATHE/GETTY IMAGES; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; OPPOSITE PAGE: ARCHIVE PL/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Freight was a profitable interurban sideline, carried on cars equipped to haul produce, grain, gravel, timber, hay, and milk, the last traveling in giant metal cans. Freight traffic served local needs—the Piedmont and Northern, traversing textile-mill country in the Carolinas, bragged of serving “A Mill a Mile.” The Los Angeles-Pacific called itself “the Lemon Growers’ Express.”

Unlike steam railroads, interurbans delivered at night and, because their tracks ran on city streets, could run to warehouses. Municipalities complained of damage to streetcar tracks and pavement, and noise irked neighbors, but in 1925, electric railways reported to the Interstate Commerce Commission $39 million in freight revenue and $153 million in passenger fares—today, $557.5 million and $2.81 billion, respectively.

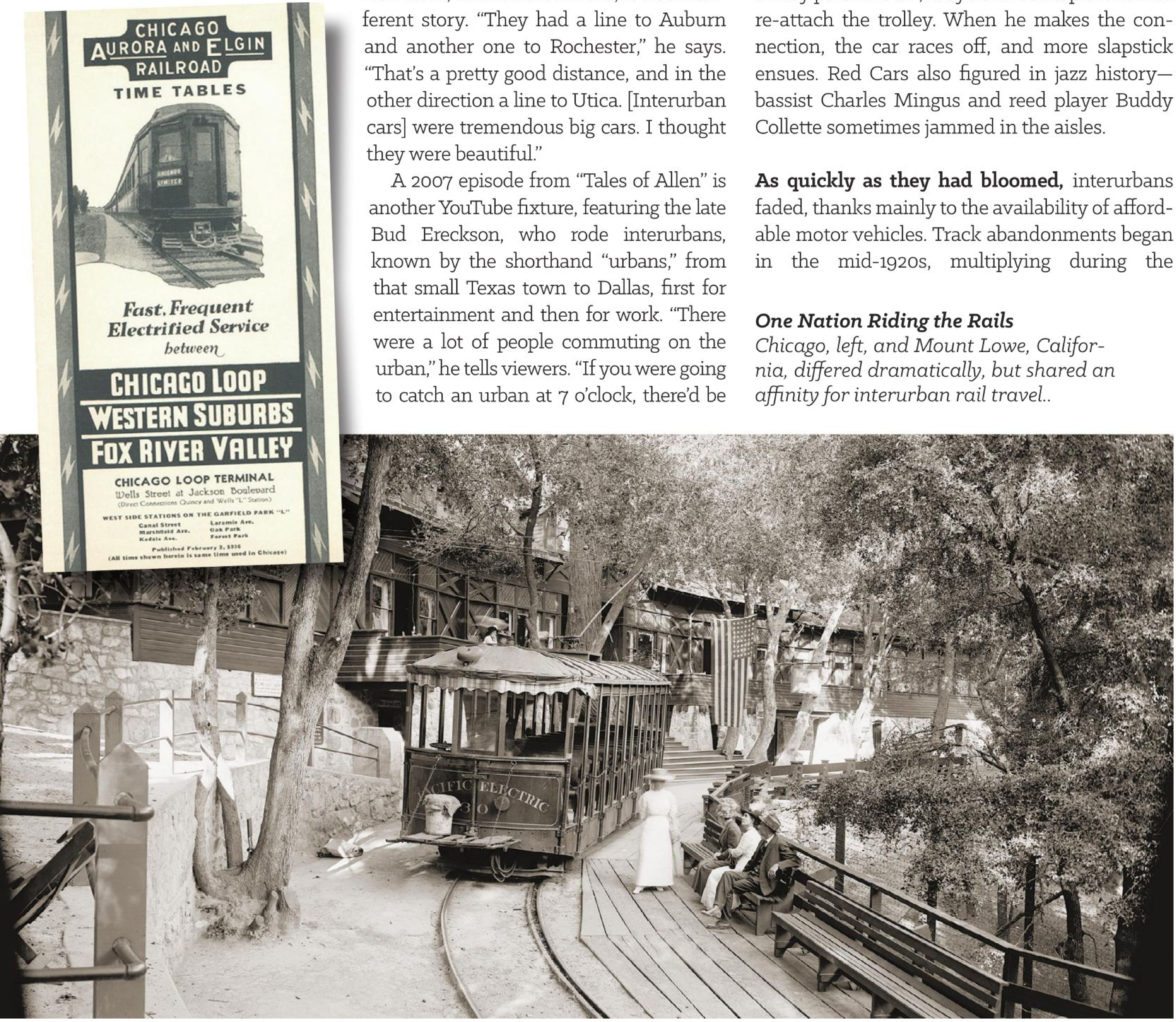
Social media postings are alive with video and stills of interurban days. YouTube post “Rail Recollections Part 4” features Bernard DuPlessis Sr. (1904-92), who grew up in Newark, New Jersey. “They just had one line from Newark to Trenton, which was really a regular trolley car, just painted differently,” he explains. But when as a youth DuPlessis visited Syracuse, New York, an interurban hub, it was a different story. “They had a line to Auburn and another one to Rochester,” he says. “That’s a pretty good distance, and in the other direction a line to Utica. [Interurban cars] were tremendous big cars. I thought they were beautiful.”

A 2007 episode from “Tales of Allen” is another YouTube fixture, featuring the late Bud Ereckson, who rode interurbans, known by the shorthand “urbans,” from that small Texas town to Dallas, first for entertainment and then for work. “There were a lot of people commuting on the urban,” he tells viewers. “If you were going to catch an urban at 7 o’clock, there’d be two urbans, back to back.” As a teen, he found the “urban” a lifeline. “Didn’t any of us have vehicles,” he says. “We’d go down to catch an urban and go to McKinney and go to the Majestic Theater to go to the movies for entertainment.”

Young drivers put interurbans to a different use. In “Racing the Interurban,” Maine resident Clyde Walker Pierce remembers pitting his auto against the Portland-Lewiston Interurban on a straightaway. “I clocked that electric car at 78 mph,” Pierce says. “It was fast! And the people on it were waving and hollering, ‘Go, go, go!’”

Hollywood featured interurbans—especially the Pacific Electric, which served Tinseltown. In 1924’s *Girl Shy*, comic actor Harold Lloyd hijacks a Red Car but loses control. The railcar hits full speed, narrowly missing pedestrians. When the trolley pole falls off, Lloyd climbs atop the roof to re-attach the trolley. When he makes the connection, the car races off, and more slapstick ensues. Red Cars also figured in jazz history—bassist Charles Mingus and reed player Buddy Collette sometimes jammed in the aisles.

As quickly as they had bloomed, interurbans faded, thanks mainly to the availability of affordable motor vehicles. Track abandonments began in the mid-1920s, multiplying during the



CHICAGO
AURORA AND ELGIN
RAILROAD
TIME TABLES

Fast, Frequent
Electrified Service
between

CHICAGO LOOP
WESTERN SUBURBS
FOX RIVER VALLEY

CHICAGO LOOP TERMINAL
Wells Street at Jackson Boulevard
(Direct Connections Quincy and Wells “L” Station)

WEST SIDE STATIONS ON THE GARFIELD PARK “L”
Canal Street
Marshfield Ave.
Kedzie Ave.
Laramie Ave.
Oak Park
Forest Park

Published February 2, 1936
(All time shown herein is same time used in Chicago)

One Nation Riding the Rails
Chicago, left, and Mount Lowe, California, differed dramatically, but shared an affinity for interurban rail travel..

L.A.P. CO.
BALLOON
CONDUCTOR
ROUTE
46

Times Gone By
A Southern California line's conductor's medallion and Indianapolis Railway staff with a change counter in 1943.

Depression. Return on investment among interurbans dropped from 3 percent in 1920 to -0.1 percent in 1939; the number of miles in service plunged from 15,337 to 3,711 during that period. In the 1920s, licensed American drivers tripled to almost 23 million. States and counties paved dirt roads. Automobiles and trucks freed travelers and shippers from rail schedules. In 1931, *Cleveland Plain Dealer* reporter Roelf Loveland, to commemorate the final run by the Cleveland, Southwestern and Columbus "Green Line," wrote this poem, quoted in H. Roger Grant's *Electric Interurbans and the American People:*

> *Oh, the trucks and the buses and the automobiles*
> *Have killed the merry rumble of the "Green Line" wheels.*
> *They grabbed up her fares, on her freight they fed.*
> *Shed a tear, Old Settler: The "Green Line's" dead.*

Some interurban operators kept their lines going but slashed spending to maintain tracks, overhead wires, and substations. Railbeds grew weedy, smooth rides got jerky, rust pocked car bodies, windows stuck open or closed. Eventually lines shut down or switched to buses. Better capitalized lines tried to sell faster service. In 1930 the Cincinnati & Lake Erie introduced high-speed, lightweight "Red Devils"—interurban cars made of steel and aluminum with leather bucket seats, luggage compartments, and bathrooms. In a race between an airplane and a Red Devil car, the interurban won. The line went under in 1939, its snazzy cars sold off. In 1931, the Philadelphia and Western (P&W) introduced all-aluminum "Bullet" cars whose aerodynamism was fine-tuned in a wind tunnel. Red Devils and Bullets could reach 80 mph, and until 1990 some repurposed Bullet cars were running on the P&W, which eventually merged into the Philly area mass transit system.

A few interurbans converted from passenger service to freight hauling, like the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City (CRANDIC) line. In the 1930s and '40s, that line's high-speed passenger cars had an identifiable motion that gave rise to the unofficial slogan, "Swing and Sway the CRANDIC Way," a nod to a swing-era bandleader's radio show, "Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye." In 1953, the CRANDIC way shifted to freight and converted to diesel. The line still serves some of Iowa's largest businesses.

During World War II, fuel and tire rationing brought surviving interurbans a reprieve as travelers returned to the rails, but with peace came closure upon closure, sometimes sudden, sometimes, as with the Pacific Electric, drawn out. The first major blow was the Depression. Between 1929 and 1933, its revenues shrank by half. Management closed several lines between 1938 and 1941, including service to Pomona, Redondo Beach, San Bernardino, and other once-major destinations. General Motors-owned Pacific City Lines bought some of those routes, switching them to buses. During World War II, defense workers, military personnel, and, briefly, Japanese-Americans headed to internment camps, packed trains. After the war, however, came the growth of Southern California's freeway system. Planners originally wanted freeway medians to carry rail tracks, but did not follow through. Rundown Pacific Electric equipment was mocked as a "slum on wheels." In 1950-51, more lines went fallow, including the routes to Santa Ana and Venice. Parent company Southern Pacific preserved the tracks on some abandoned lines for freight use. In 1953, the Southern Pacific sold Pacific Electric to Metropolitan Coach Lines for conversion to bus service. Local opposition prevented wholesale conversion but regulators allowed the Hollywood and Burbank lines to shift to buses and close the Subway Terminal. On the last car out of there in June 1955, rail fans hung a banner reading "To Oblivion."

In 1958, a public entity, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority, purchased Pacific Electric. The new owners discontinued all rail routes except those to Long Beach—the lines that had been Henry Huntington's first venture as a rail mogul. In April 1961, the last Long Beach-bound train left LA, and Pacific Electric rolled into history.

A handful of other interurbans, mainly in big cities, survived into the mid-1950s. The San Francisco area's Key System was started in 1903 by Francis "Borax" Smith, who had made a fortune mining that mineral. This motley of East Bay streetcar lines and interurbans connected San Francisco with Oakland, Berkeley, and adjoining communities, first via ferry and later over rail tracks on the Bay Bridge. During World War II, thousands of workers at Bay-area shipyards rode the Key. Afterward,

LEFT: INDIANA HISTROICAL SOCIETY, P0391; BASS PHOTO COLLECTION, INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY; RIGHT: PHOTO BY STEVE CRISE, MICHAEL PATRIS COLLECTION, COURTESY OF THE PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES

ownership went to General Motors-backed National City Lines, which replaced streetcar and interurban lines with buses across the country. National City discontinued East Bay local streetcars in 1948 but kept the cross-bay interurbans running until 1958.

The Chicago, Aurora and Elgin—"the Roaring Elgin"—was one of three Chicago interurbans owned and operated by electric utilities tycoon Samuel Insull ("Wizard of the Wires," February 2018). Insull poured millions into new steel cars, new tracks, new signals and other improvements into the 1930s, when his empire collapsed and he fled to Europe trying to avoid prosecution for stock fraud. The lines changed owners, surviving for decades. The Roaring Elgin linked to Chicago's downtown Loop through the Garfield Street elevated, but in the 1950s, construction of the Congress—now Eisenhower—Expressway did away with the Garfield El. The Elgin ceased passenger operation in 1957.

The Chicago, North Shore and Milwaukee, which connected Chicago to southeast Wisconsin, was the second of Insull's interurbans and another El feeder line. In the early 1930s, *Electric Traction* magazine designated this line as "Fastest Interurban in America" three years running. In 1941 came the line's popular "Electroliners," articulated four-car units incorporating a bar car and able to hit 100 mph. After increasing losses throughout the '50s, the North Shore closed in 1963. The South Shore Line, the last of Insull's three interurbans, and one of two interurbans still running, uses Millennium Terminal at the Loop, which it shares with METRA, another commuter rail line. Since 1990, a public authority, the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, has owned the line. The South Shore connects Chicago to Indiana towns like South Bend, Hammond, and Gary. The line's western portion is basically a modern electric commuter railroad. However, east of Gary, the South Shore line still displays vintage interurban characteristics, such as a single track down the middle of 11th and 10th streets in Michigan City.

The Philadelphia and Western, which connected Philadelphia with its western suburbs, was one of the few interurbans powered not by overhead wires but a third, electrified rail. The P&W was always state-of-the-art, from its Bullet trains to former North Shore Electroliners renamed Liberty Liners. Since 1970, the surviving P&W line, renamed the Norristown High-Speed Line, has been part of Philadelphia's SEPTA public transit system and, like Chicago's South Shore, survives as a modern interurban. A second P&W line, abandoned, enjoys a new life as the Radnor hiking trail.

The Illinois Terminal—originally Illinois Traction—was started in the early 1900s by William B. McKinley—not the U.S. president, but an investment banker who later became a U.S. senator. The line ran from Peoria to St. Louis, Missouri. Starting in the 1930s management, while keeping passenger service, began to focus on doing more freight business and establishing interchanges with other freight lines. In 1948, Illinois Terminal bought new high-tech passenger cars called "Streamliners" that had trouble rounding curves in city streets. Interurban passenger service ended in 1956. The line continued as a freight railroad until the early 1980s, when it was absorbed by the Norfolk and Western. ★

Everything old is new again

Interurban rail's unlikely second—and third—acts

Classic interurban cars, usually restored by rail fans, are available for inspection and rides at railroad and trolley museums coast to coast. A fine example is Denver and Intermountain Railway Car No. 25, operated from 1911 until that line closed in 1950. In 1988, the Denver-based Rocky Mountain Railroad Club—rockymtnrrclub.org—embarked on a 20-year project aimed at restoring the vintage car. Volunteers spent more than 16,000 hours replacing wood components and window glass, installing new doors, and repainting in the original color scheme. Today, the group periodically takes the car out to offer free rides at the Denver Federal Center.

Since the 1970s, many cities, in response to congestion and smog, have built "light rail"—meaning vehicles like streetcars but with higher passenger capacity that, in some areas, use designated rights-of-way. Most light rail system systems operate within cities and their immediate suburbs, but a few might qualify as interurbans. For example, New Jersey Transit's Hudson-Bergen Light Rail line connects Hoboken, Jersey City, Bayonne, and nearby towns. Such arrangements exemplify a significant difference between yesterday and today, says Orange Empire Museum curator Laner: "Light rail systems are operated by public entities that don't have to show a profit the way the old interurbans did." Many arriviste light rail systems follow the routes old interurban lines did. The first tracks Los Angeles laid for its new multi-line system, the Blue Line, follow the route of the Pacific Electric Long Beach line.

—Raanan Geberer

LIGHTRAIL
NJ TRANSIT
2048A

Rails Reinvented
A light rail train departs Exchange Place Station in Jersey City, New Jersey in 2011.

CLARENCE HOLMES PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Shell Game

In 1938, pecan shellers in San Antonio stood up to that city's establishment

By Barbara Finlay

THIS SHOP UNFAIR
PECAN WORKERS LOCAL 172
C.I.O.
ON STRIKE AGAINST STARVATION WAGES!
EN HUELGA CONTRA SALARIOS DE HAMBRE!

ON STRIKE AGAINST STARVATION WAGES!
EN HUELGA CONTRA SALARIOS DE HAMBRE!
ON STRIKE AGAINST STARVATION WAGES!
EN HUELGA CONTRA SALARIOS DE HAMBRE!
ON STRIKE AGAINST STARVATION WAGES!
EN HUELGA CONTRA SALARIOS DE HAMBRE!

The People, United
Weary of management's high-handed behavior, strikers picket Southern Pecan Shelling at 135 East Cevallos Street in San Antonio, Texas, on February 25, 1938.

SAN ANTONIO LIGHT PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION;
UTSA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS; GETTY IMAGES

Groves of Plenty
Weather, soil, and cheap labor made pecans a prominent Texas crop.

WILLIAM DEMING HORNADAY PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, ARCHIVES AND INFORMATION SERVICES DIVISION, TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION

On January 31, 1938, a wildcat walkout by thousands of Latino workers, mostly women, rocked the West Side of San Antonio, Texas. In that barrio, where many families depended on seasonal work shelling pecans to get through the winter, shellers set down their rudimentary tools at hundreds of shabby, overcrowded factories and took to the streets. The action came in response to an immediate and unilateral 20 percent cut in shellers' already skeletal wages by the region's dominant pecan distributor. The ensuing confrontation, which establishment San Antonio blamed on communist-inspired outside agitators, actually had arisen from local frustration with wages, working conditions, and harsh bias that characterized treatment of Latinos in that region and era. The strike came at a hinge moment for the pecan industry and workers' gains proved fleeting, but for Mexican-Americans living in San Antonio and vicinity the action has continued to resound.

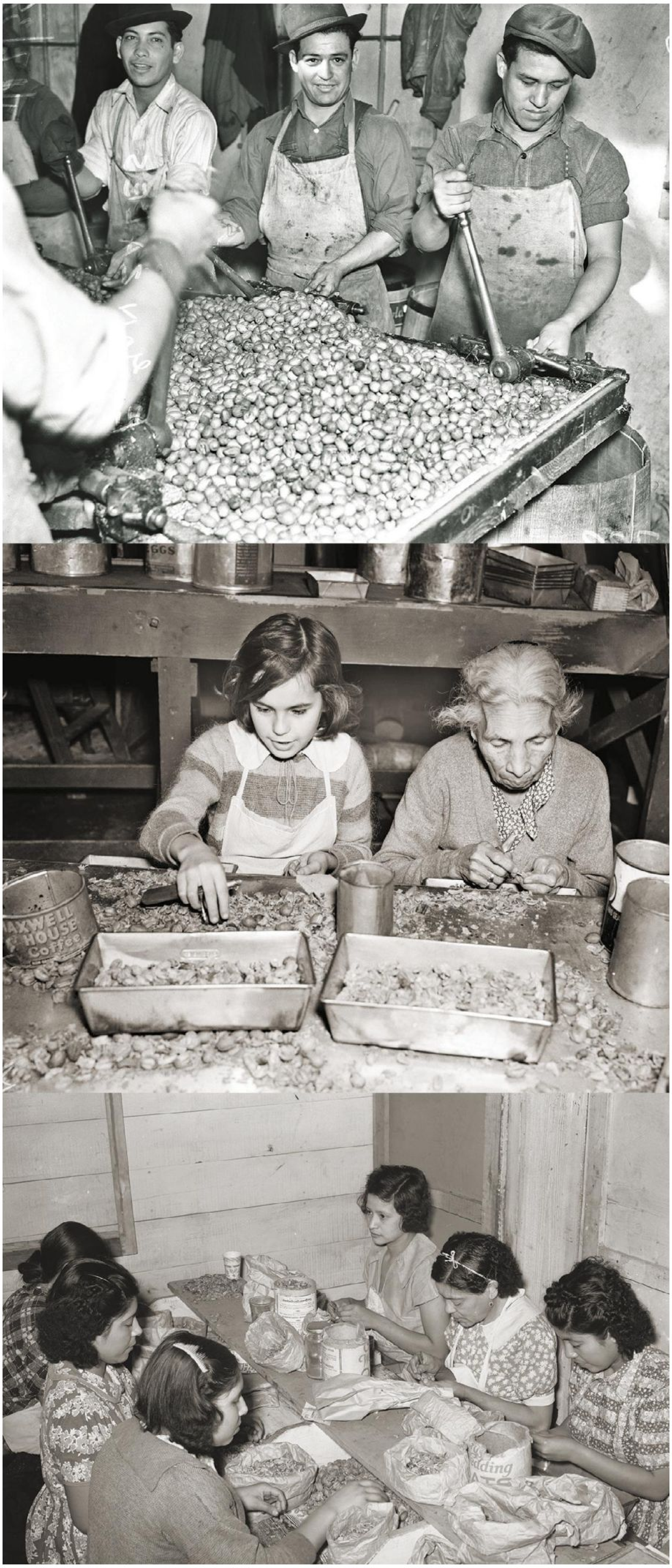
The mention of Depression-era American labor strife usually summons images of skilled craftsmen in northern cities unionizing to force industrial behemoths to raise wages and improve working conditions, not of unskilled, marginalized minorities and residents of Southern states organizing successfully to improve their lot. That 1938 strike in San Antonio by just such workers evolved into one of the most important labor events in Texas and American history.

The strikers were poor, mostly illiterate Spanish speakers without skills. At least half were female. The impact of their action—the largest walkout in Texas during the Depression and the first major successful strike by Mexican and Mexican-American, or Tejano, workers—resonated profoundly. "What began as a spontaneous walkout over slashed pay rates soon morphed into a full-fledged social movement...with repercussions that went far beyond considerations of wage levels in a single industry," writes historian John Weber in his 2015 book, *From South Texas to the Nation.*

Surrounded for hundreds of miles by pecan groves, San Antonio was the historic center of the Texas pecan market, which was the centerpiece of the American market for the nuts. Based on harvests from native trees along the rivers of Central and South Texas, the state led the nation in pecan production. Commercial pecan marketing began in the late 1800s, when Swiss-born candy maker and baker Alfred Duerler began shipping shelled nuts to markets in the Northeast. In 1919 Texas named the pecan its state tree. By the 1920s, San Antonio was processing most of the pecans grown in Texas.

Harvest and shelling season was between November and March. In those pre-hybridization days, pecans had stiff woody shells about 1/8" thick. Whole pecan meats, packaged while still fresh, brought the best prices, adding urgency to the task of processing. But cracking a nut without damaging the meat was no simple task. Originally Duerler's workers cracked nut shells with railroad spikes, after which young Latinas picked free the nut meats using heavy curved needles intended for sewing burlap. When a mechanical cracking machine debuted in 1889, Duerler adopted it; in 1914, crackers began to be electrified. By the 1920s, power crackers were standard. Channels fed nuts by size to a breaker. That device applied enough pressure to shatter the shell without harming the meat, which still had to be separated from the shell's soft interior. Young Latinas picked nut meat by hand.

In 1926, bucking a nationwide trend toward automation, Julius Seligmann and Joe Freeman founded Southern Pecan Shelling Company. Their outfit's picking line was manual, with men doing the cracking and women the shelling. Enterprising crackers used a purpose-built tool—a wooden handle with metal teeth at its business end and a short spike on one side. Pressing the teeth against the shell, a worker gave a quick twist to crack the nut, then with the spike loosened the meat. But most shellers improvised, adapting whatever was handy, like cobblers' needles intended for stitching leather. The goal, not always reached, was to extract two intact nut halves. A picker working a 51-hour week and paid by the pound earned a little more than $2.



On the Line
From top: At Southern Pecan before the walkout, E. Gonzales and Pete Torres use lever-driven crackers to loosen meats; shellers Maria del Refugio Ozuna, 13, and Mrs. San Juan Gonzales, 77; at another factory, workers separate pecan meat from shell bits.

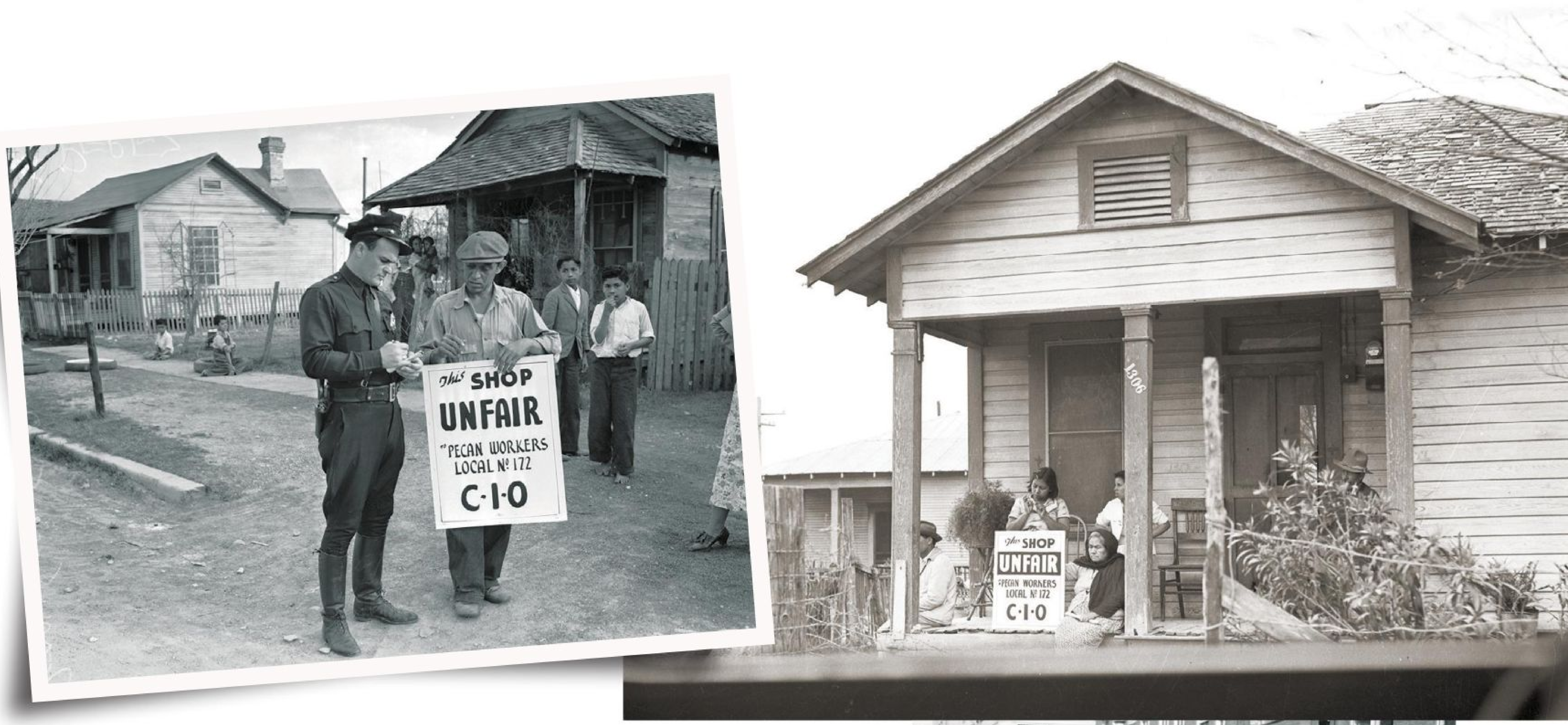
FROM TOP: SAN ANTONIO LIGHT PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION; UTSA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (2); LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

By the 1930s, half the nation's shelled pecans were coming from San Antonio. Southern Pecan was handling about half the Texas crop and shelling about 40 percent of pecans sold in the United States. In 1939, the U.S. Labor Department reported that during 1935-36 Southern Pecan profits exceeded $500,000—today, $9 million-plus. By avoiding outlays for machines and subcontracting shelling under tight controls, the company had built a monopoly. Contractors bought whole pecans from Southern Pecan and sold cleaned nut meat to Southern Pecan at a scant profit. Besides setting prices, Southern Pecan dictated wages and other parameters, blacklisting contractors who strayed.

Pecans were not a pillar of the local economy, but for the city's poorest Latino residents, most of whom lived on the West Side, nut processing was a key source of income, earned seasonally in rough sheds optimistically labeled "factories." In the early 1930s, the West Side counted some 400 pecan factories that at season's height employed as many as 20,000 workers. A few families shelled at home, with all hands cracking nuts, but most shelling took place in ramshackle buildings around the barrio, home to mostly impoverished Mexican citizens and Tejanos who wintered there between stints as migrant cotton and sugar beet harvesters.

The West Side barrio, four miles square, was among the country's worst slums—Audrey Granneberg, in *Survey Graphic*, characterized housing there as "floorless shacks renting at $2 to $8 per month...crowded together in crazy fashion on nearly every lot. They are mostly without plumbing, sewage connections or electric lights. Open, shallow wells are often situated only a few feet away from unsanitary privies. Streets and sidewalks are unpaved and become slimy mudholes in rainy weather."

Nearly 80 percent of West Side households had only kerosene lamps for lighting; a higher percentage cooked over open fires, subsisting mainly on tortillas and beans. Fewer than 20 percent of barrio homes had access to potable water, and only about 10 percent had indoor plumbing. In some blocks, 50 families shared a single outhouse. Scarcity of running water discouraged bathing



VIVA
C.I.O
VIVA
LA
HUELGA
6324

Taking to the Streets *From left, police officer Arthur Perez arrests picketer for blocking sidewalk, residents back strike from home, officer confiscates vehicle seized for violating city sign ordinances.*

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: SAN ANTONIO LIGHT PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION; UTSA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS(6)

and handwashing, multiplying health problems. The neighborhood was rife with malnutrition and tuberculosis, and infant mortality. High unemployment, racism, and wage discrimination complicated these factors. In addition to competition for jobs from a constant stream of new immigrants, resident migrant agricultural workers returned each winter to their homes on the west side, ballooning the unemployment rate.

Historically, two industries in the barrio hired low-skill Latinas: Frick Cigars and a cluster of garment shops. Both paid better than pecan shelling. Early in the Depression, San Antonio cigar and garment workers tried to organize, gaining minor benefits amid fierce suppression by city police. San Antonio native Emma Tenayuca emerged from these efforts as a strong, audacious leader. Adept at public speaking and organizing, Tenayuca was 16 in 1933 when she joined the women striking Frick Cigars for better wages, improved working conditions, and recognition of their union. Arrested and jailed, Tenayuca stood firm, a year later helping to organize a garment workers' strike. Tenayuca took up other causes, joining an umbrella entity, the Workers' Alliance, organized to fight low wages, ethnic and gender discrimination in wages, and cuts to Works Progress Administration relief rolls. Among Tenayuca's campaigns were efforts to obtain government-funded clothing, school supplies, and free lunches for children whose parents were on relief. In 1937, Tenayuca joined the Communist Party, less out of its internationalist ideology than for the practical reason that "no one else but the communists expressed any interest in helping San Antonio's dispossessed Mexicans," according to historian Zaragosa Vargas.

Pecan shelling not only paid less than rolling cigars and sewing but subjected workers to harsher conditions. Shellers sat elbow-to-elbow on unpadded backless benches 8 to 10 hours per day—it was not unusual for 100 people to cram a room 25x40 feet—working in dim light from windows opened only in good weather. Shellers were "packed wall to wall, shoulder to shoulder with people sitting at benches to shell the pecans—old people, young people, children from the earliest age, sick people, well people, bad people, good people," a man who had shelled pecans as a boy told historian Matthew Keyworth. "Whole families...worked there 10, 12, 14 hours daily to together bring home enough to keep body and soul together." Shelling generated a fine brown dust that filled the factory air and entered workers' lungs, exacerbating already rampant asthma and tuberculosis. Until 1936, when San Antonio mandated installation of running water and indoor toilets, most factories lacked those facilities, and even after the regulation took effect had only one toilet for all workers. Shell splinters caused cuts and infections.

Shellers earned a piece rate, gauged by weight and quality. Intact pecan halves paid more than "pieces," or fragments of halves that broke. Fragments had to be of a certain size to count. Averaging 8-9 lb. of pecan meats per day at 6 to 7 cents per lb., a family of four earned about $192 per year. Fulltime workers averaged $2.50 weekly, and the typical two-worker family unit averaged about 69 cents a day, according to a government study. Labor Department data showed that from September 1 to December 31, 1937, the highest-paid Southern Pecan workers averaged less than $3 a week. In 1938, unskilled male industrial workers averaged $15 to $20 a week. In season, shellers put in at least six 9-to-10-hour days a week, but that was only late November through March. Most relied on municipal relief to survive.

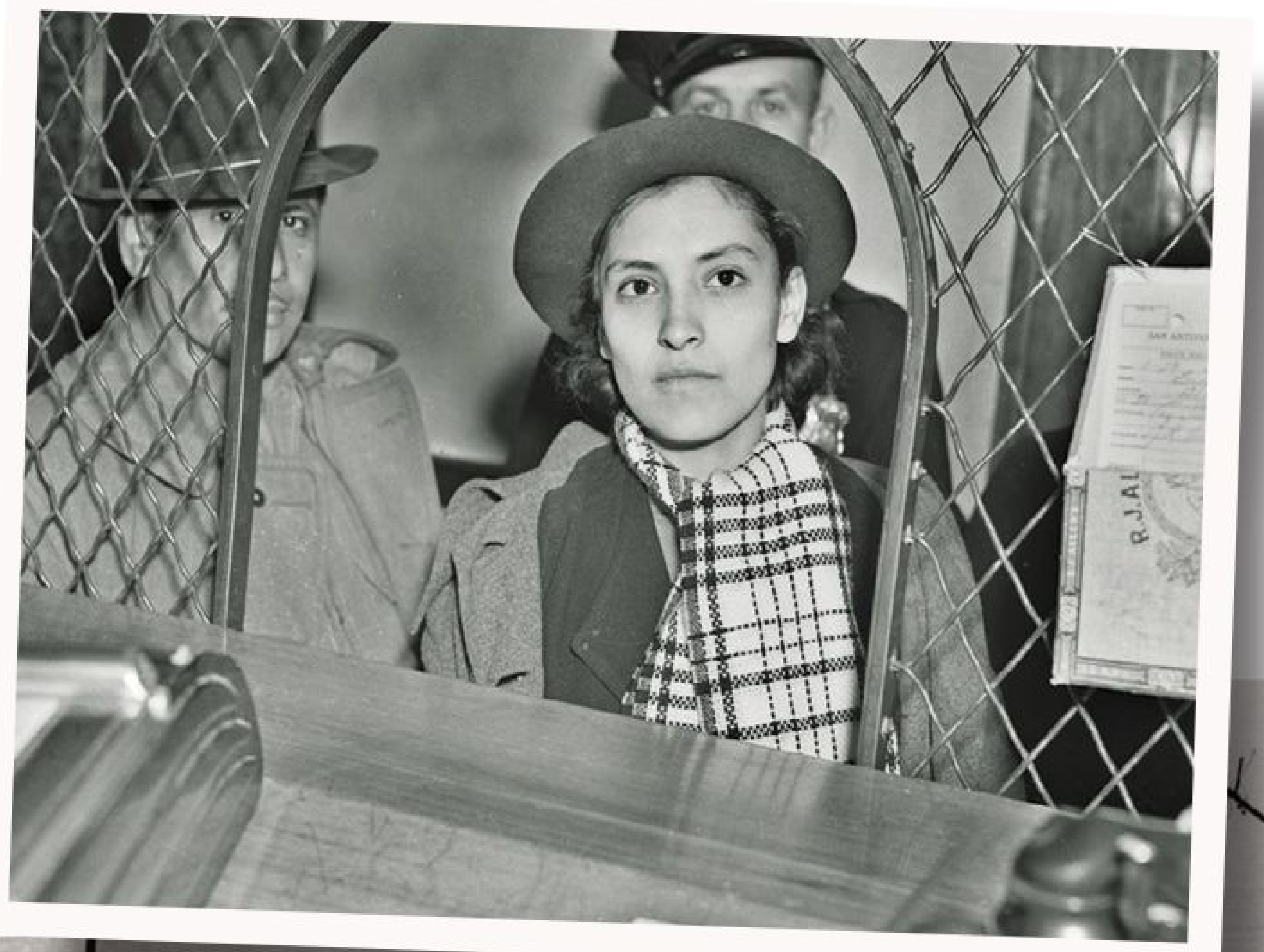
During the San Antonio winter, shelling was all the work there was—an ill-paid and grueling necessity, and, until the Depression clamped down, the province of women and a few elderly or disabled men. The worsening economy forced able-bodied men onto the shelling benches—for many, a humiliating experience, said Alberta Snid, who shelled pecans as a child. "Men had to come in and sit next to the family to do the work," said Snid. "You take, for example, my father—I think that as a last resort he had to go in and shell pecans. He was a very proud man, but he had to leave his pride behind him and to go in there and sit next to us to earn a living because there was nothing else."

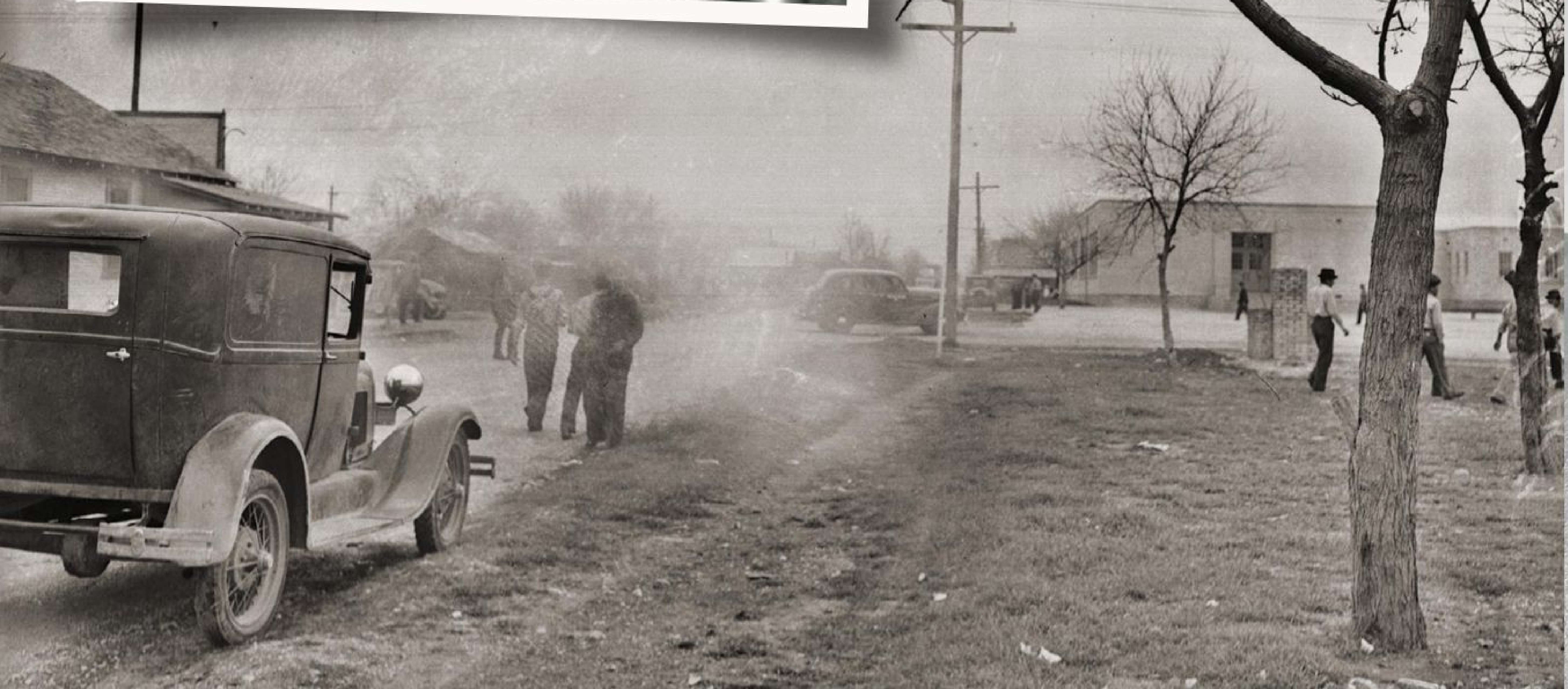
Access to this captive winter labor force was why, unlike pecan wholesalers elsewhere, Seligmann decided in 1926 to forgo modernizing his production lines. The company's shellers occasionally protested conditions and pay, and in the early 1930s tried twice to organize in campaigns cut short by fierce resistance from Southern Pecan and San Antonio officials. In November 1937, the new Congress of Industrial Organizations chartered the Texas Pecan Shelling Workers Union, led by Albert Gonsen. In San Antonio, members of that union formed Local 172. Soon one of the most important labor conflicts in Texas history had gotten under way.

On Monday, January 31, 1938, Southern Pecan contractors, at Julius Seligmann's direction, cut the rate paid shellers per pound for pieces and halves from 6 and 7 cents, respectively, to 5 and 6 cents, reducing a punitively low wage by nearly 20 percent. As soon as word of this spread, thousands of shellers spontaneously walked off the job in. Statewide shelling workers organizer Gonsen at first hesitated to involve his union, but as more shellers hit the bricks, Local 172 joined the wildcat strike.

Strikers not only were protesting pay cuts, but also seeking union recognition and the right to bargain collectively on their own behalf. They demanded factories restore wage rates pending arbitration. By mid-February at 130 West Side plants, over half the shellers, mostly women, were on strike and had joined Local 172, according to the *San Antonio Express*. Emma Tenayuca, now 22, was elected as a primary leader. She allied with fellow activists Maria Solis Sager, Minnie Rendon, and others. Tenayuca's youth was no hindrance, but to avoid red-baiting over her Communist Party history the national union leadership muzzled her. Even so, many strikers continued to look to her for direction. Don Henderson, president of the national union, arrived in San Antonio. He named J. Austin Beasley, an experienced CIO organizer with no communist ties, to run the strike. Beasley headed the all-male strike committee, with Tenayuca staging daily meetings, writing and distributing circulars, and encouraging strikers by getting food to their families. Arrested on charges of communist agitation, she spent time in the Bexar County jail. Across the West Side workers, many carrying placards reading "This Shop Unfair Pecan Workers Local 172 CIO," were picketing pecan factories.

Opposing the strike were San Antonio's civic pillars: the Democratic political machine and police, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and the press. The Mexican American Chamber of Commerce and the local chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens disavowed the strike. Official statements attempted to downplay the action's size and impact. The city blamed "outside agitators" for whipping up the citizenry. Mayor C. K. Quin and his police department went after strikers legally and illegally. Officers teargassed, whipped, and clubbed





Going Nose to Nose
Counterclockwise, Emma Tenayuca of Workers Alliance and Local 172 president Leandro Avila after being arrested; tear gas discharged by police scatters picketers; San Antonio Police Chief Owen Kilday.

They Also Served
From top right: Labor Secretary Frances Perkins sided with strikers; cooks at Alliance Hall made thousands of tortillas to feed strikers; Maury Maverick, center, is sworn in as mayor by his father, Albert.

strikers. Claiming to be enforcing a law requiring the city marshal, an office that no longer existed, to approve advertisements, police declared picketers' signs illegal, arresting those carrying placards and destroying the signs. Police officers entered homes to threaten strikers with arrest or deportation unless they returned to the shelling bench. Officers harassed and arrested men and women, young and old, able and disabled. The city deputized municipal firefighters armed with clubs to assist them.

In the course of six weeks, city authorities arrested more than 1,000 people on charges of blocking sidewalks, carrying signs without permits, assembling unlawfully, and the like. Police sometimes crammed 30 prisoners into a cell designed to hold four, turning firehoses on those who protested. When the Bexar County jail could hold no more, officers hauled arrested persons into the scrub outside of town and abandoned them. Jailed strikers could be heard at night singing Spanish-language verses to "Solidarity Forever" and "We Shall Not Be Moved."

According to San Antonio Police Chief Owen Kilday, outsiders and "communists" were trying to stir insurrection on the West Side. Kilday said he would use any means to defeat the troublemakers—a stance a Labor Department official described as "a subterfuge." Incidence of strike-related violence was "almost entirely instigated by San Antonio's law enforcement establishment," historian John Weber said.

San Antonio's Health Department, historically active at best only marginally on the West Side, closed municipal soup kitchens frequented by strikers. The city's Catholic leadership, including Archbishop Jerome Drossaerts, condemned the strike as communist-led. Local newspapers sided mostly with the authorities, in editorials pooh-poohing the action's significance and condemning unions and workers for undertaking the action. In spite of or because of such establishment resistance, the protest grew, attracting attention outside San Antonio that came to focus on police abuse.

In February, Texas Governor James Allred asked the State Industrial Commission to investigate. Mayor Quin locked state investigators out of city offices; Bexar County gave them working space in the courthouse. Two days of testimony from both sides led the panel to conclude unanimously that the police had no basis for their violent behavior and that the strikers were raising legitimate issues. The commission specifically objected to police refusal to permit peaceful assembly in locations hired for that purpose, forcible return of workers to the shelling bench under threat of arrest, and destruction of union signs and buttons. City leaders ignored the report.

Coverage of and protests about the situation spread. CIO organizer George Lambert described how city police actions attracted the notice of Mexican government officials when police clubbed a 60-year-old woman carrying her grandchild past a West Side shelling factory.

The woman who was beaten, a citizen of Mexico, was not even a striker; she was on her way to buy groceries. Mexican diplomats protested this and other strike-related incidents to the U.S. State Department, the first time a foreign government had registered such a complaint against an American city's police. The *San Antonio Light* reported that the Mexican consul contacted Governor Allred on behalf of the Mexican government to protest the arrest in San Antonio of 63 Mexican citizens.

Learning of shellers' wretched pay while in town, Labor Secretary Frances Perkins asked publicly, "Do you in San Antonio call that wages?" *Time* and other national periodicals covered the strike. Prominent San Antonio residents, including members of the Women's International League of

THIS PAGE: CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: SAN ANTONIO LIGHT PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION; UTSA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (2); LIBRARY OF CONGRESS;
OPPOSITE PAGE: SAN ANTONIO LIGHT PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION; UTSA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Peace and Freedom led by Cassie Winfree and Minnie Rendon, investigated jailers' treatment of female strikers, and based on their findings of abuse leveled a protest of their own. The League also sought permission to provide food and supplies to the strikers.

Caustic radio and newspaper coverage, pressure from Governor Allred, and the strikers' own resilience forced the city and Southern Pecan to accept arbitration. On March 9, 1938, slightly more than five weeks after the wildcat walkout, Seligmann agreed to recognize International Pecan Workers Local 172 as the sole bargaining agent for San Antonio shellers. Pending arbitration, workers returned to the benches.

Arbitrators reset the shellers' wage at 5½ and 6½ cents per pound of pieces and halves from June 1 to November 1, 1938, when the rate would return to the pre-strike level of 6 and 7 cents per pound. As November 1 neared, Congress enacted the Fair Labor Standards Act, stipulating a national minimum wage of 25 cents per hour. This was more than triple the arbitrated shelling wage, making hand shelling much more expensive than automated shelling. Southern Pecan tried and failed to obtain an exemption from the minimum wage. The company installed shelling machines. By March 1939, Southern Pecan was employing only 1,800 workers; by 1941, those ranks had shrunk to 600. Around 10,000 workers lost their seasonal jobs, and Pecan Shellers Local 172 withered to nothing.

Despite the long-term negatives, many observers thought the action a victory because it engendered solidarity and cultural identification. "The pecan shellers strike was about more than wages. Those who remember it do not talk of the wage increase or even of the workers who ultimately and permanently lost jobs in the industry," attorney Emily Jones wrote in a 1991 paper, "Ya Basta! The San Antonio Pecan Shellers' Strike of 1938." "They remember a mass movement, and the common comparison is to the civil rights marches of the 1960s."

West Siders' changed political attitudes remade San Antonio politics. The old equation of poll tax payment in exchange for a vote and bloc voting to the machine's whim evaporated. No longer were Latino citizens willing to sell their votes to the bosses, and for a time the dominant political machine lost traction. The 1939 San Antonio mayoral election saw incumbent Quin, the bosses' pick, oppose progressive Maury Maverick. Campaigning vigorously on the West Side, Maverick garnered many votes there, in the process seeing his surname come to mean a disruptive upstart. Maverick beat Quin and as mayor 1939-41 he improved conditions in the West Side. During his one term Maverick did much to honor the city's Mexican heritage.

Blacklisted, Emma Tenayuca was run out of San Antonio. In San Francisco, California, she studied education at San Francisco State College, returning to San Antonio for a master's degree, spending her career teaching in her hometown's Harlandale School District. She retired in 1982 and died in 1999.

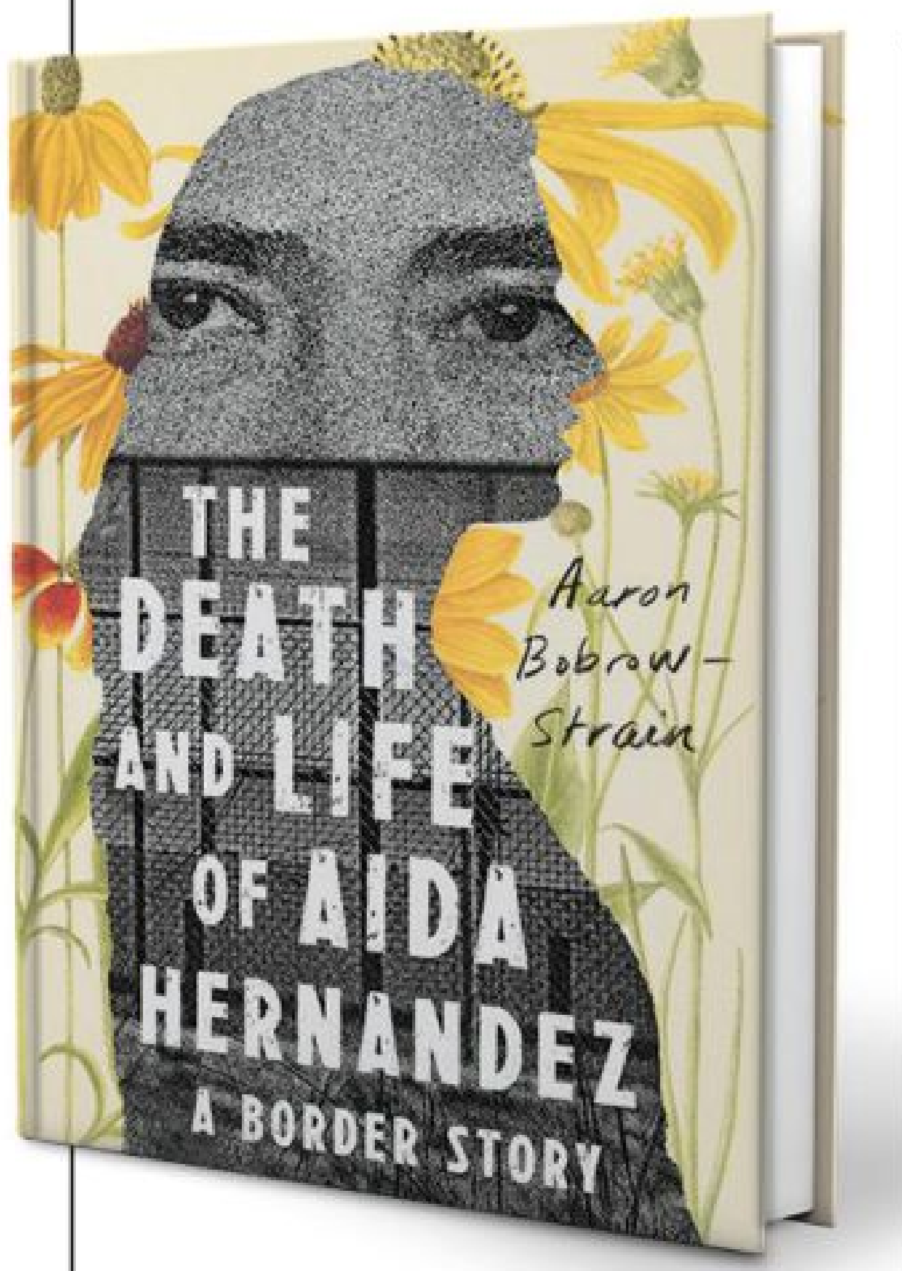
The pecan sheller strike empowered a community previously mired in passivity. "We learned that through organization we could do something," striker Alberta Snid told an interviewer. "Maybe we didn't win that much as far as money was concerned, but we learned that being united is power…we forgot a little bit of the fear that we had, because before we couldn't say nothing, we couldn't talk, period. Afterwards it was entirely different."

Some changes came and went. In 1941, accusations of communist fellow travelerdom got Maverick booted from office. The barrio stayed poor. Most pecan shelling jobs vanished. But many former strikers recalled with great pride their days standing up to the city machine and to Southern Pecan, and most held onto the sense of community and dignity arising from that action. Emma Tenayuca is celebrated as a hero of Latino civil rights in Texas, remembered primarily for her stand on behalf of the shellers and other dispossessed Tejanos in Depression-era San Antonio. ★

Meeting the Future
Automated gear like these cracking units at Southern Pecan in 1938 doomed manual labor.

Memento Mori
On the Mexico side of a wall at Nogales, Arizona, memorials honor those who died trying to immigrate.

BROKEN PROMISED LAND



The Death and Life of Aida Hernandez: A Border Story
By Aaron Bobrow-Strain
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2019; $28

Between Douglas, Arizona, and Agua Prieta in the state of Sonora, Mexico, lies the border between the United States and Mexico—an imaginary line just south of what once was an American company town made prosperous by a copper smelting plant. For work and for fun, Americans and Mexicans traversed that line with ease and in both directions. By the time Aida Hernandez's story begins in the 1990s, the smelter has closed. Douglas is in steep decline. And yet immigrants still cross over in search of opportunity and safety. Aida arrives in Douglas in 1996 at age eight with her mother, who with her children is fleeing a violent husband. Aida spends the next 20 years crisscrossing this divide, a quasi-stateless survivor with only partial rights in either country, her story the lens through with Bobrow-Strain examines larger themes.

This ethnographic tale bristles with defiant humor and heroic characters constrained by a hardening border that disdains empathy. In 1965, Johnson administration reforms slashed legitimate Mexican migration, beginning the era in America of the "illegal immigrant," a phrase defined by an enforcement-only strategy offering little flexibility or nuance. Management of border security evolved to emphasize a "militarized masculinity" harder on women, who if undocumented are less likely to report abuse by a partner or a border official, than on male migrants. Incarcerated, Aida confronted officials to demand access for herself and fellow female prisoners to shampoo and sanitary napkins. Her story illustrates the longstanding programmatic separation of children from parents, a condition that carries through generations, as seen in the trauma experienced by Aida's son Gabriel, an American citizen. Laws heralded as solutions—the Dream Act, the Violence Against Women Act—fail Gabriel's mother as well.

Bobrow-Strain avoids romanticizing poverty and its attendant problems, painting a complex portrait of Aida that challenges assumptions about immigration and citizenship and shows

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

how those assumptions intertwine with attitudes about economics, policing, and gender. He questions whether the United States has manufactured a perpetually profitable crisis, insofar as private companies that operate immigrant detention centers are thriving, and in most border towns the surest path to the American Dream is a job in law enforcement or corrections.

Illuminating a single person's experience, *Death and Life* unmasks a system cruel to many. Aida Hernandez does triumph, but at so startling a human cost that her story resounds as an indictment of American immigration policy. ***—Vanessa Johnson is a writer and musician in El Paso, Texas.***

CREATING ANDREW

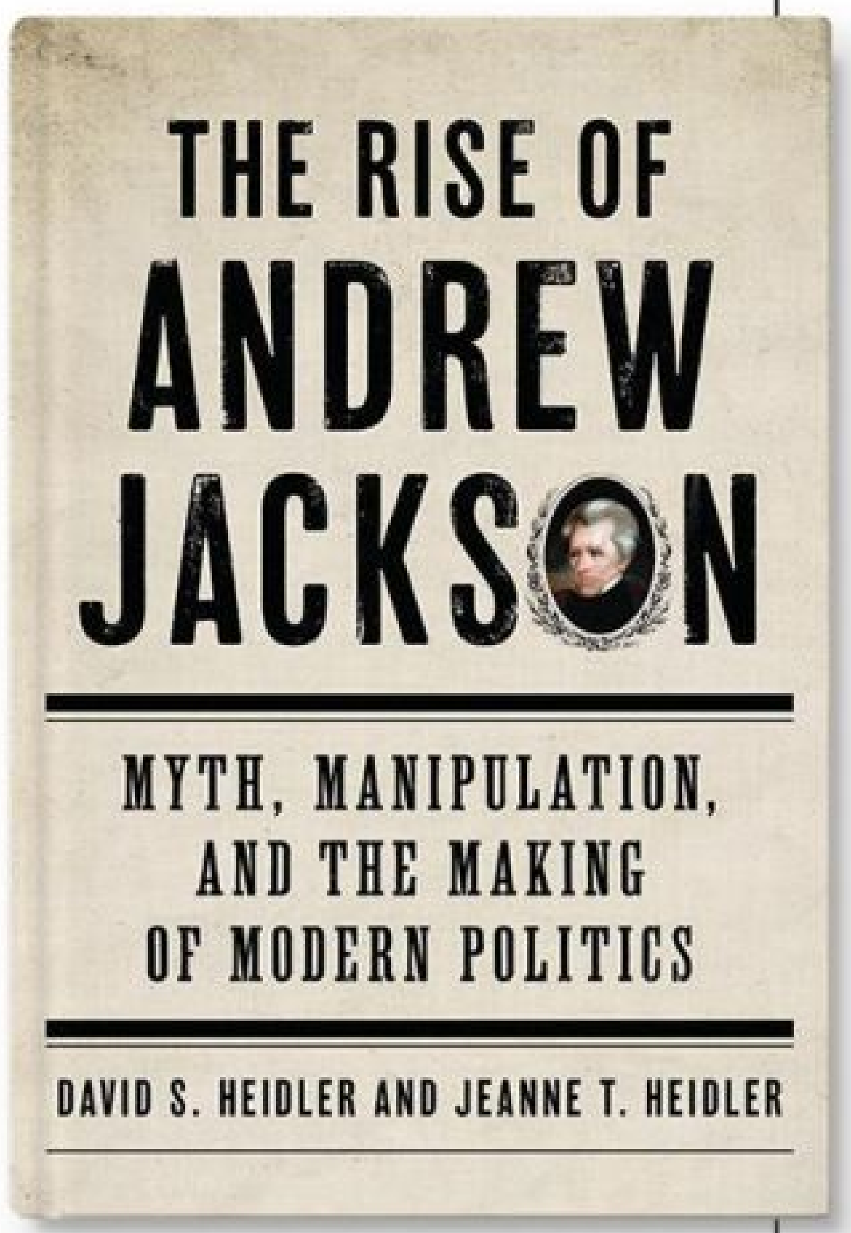
"The man the people were poised to make president in 1828 never really existed," the Heidlers write. "The actual Andrew Jackson had been groomed to fit an image." That image was of a hero who beat the British at New Orleans and the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend. Old Hickory's close friend, John Overton, ran the Nashville Junto, a group that orchestrated Jackson's rise. Obscuring his repeated insubordination, marriage to a woman not yet shed of her spouse, trading in slaves, and slaughtering wounded Indians after battle, the Junto whitewashed temper and ambition out of Jackson's public portrait. Among evidence manifesting his mindset was his letter notifying the War Department of his soldiers' willingness to show "no constitutional scruples," a guidon of his own attitude toward authority.

The authors, husband and wife, discuss multiple Jackson biographies, each sanitized to mask vexing inconsistences and ugly facts. They discern between Jacksonians—true believers supporting "universal white manhood suffrage, territorial expansion, and the elimination of the Second Bank of the United States"—and Jacksonites, who backed him seeking power for themselves.

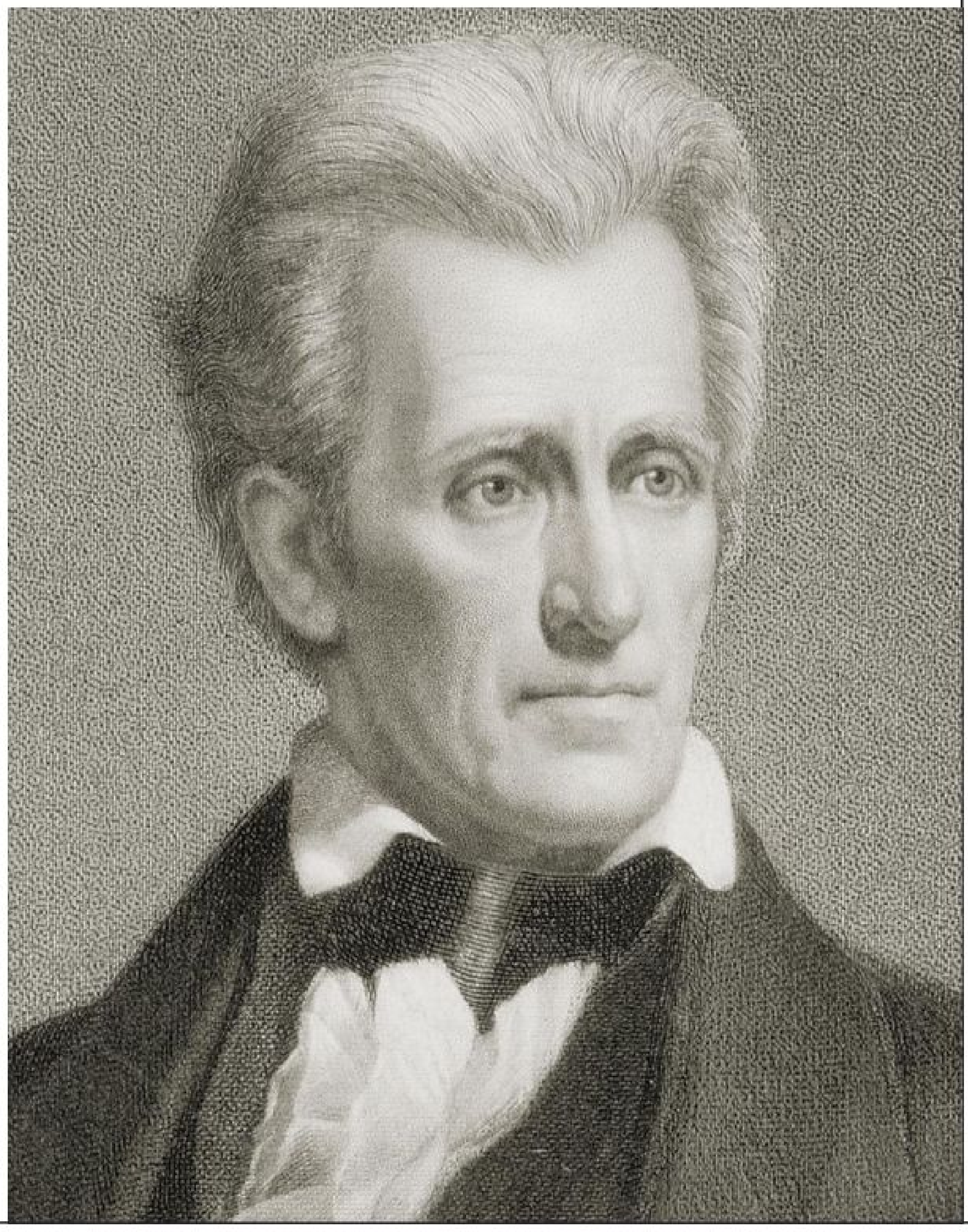
In 1822, the Junto marshaled grassroots support for Jackson as he hewed to the style of the day, professing demure lack of interest in the presidency while declaring that anyone called to serve must obey the people. Handlers discouraged him from voicing positions, a stand that, given North-South relations, Atlantic coast/hinterland rivalries, and specific state issues and personalities, worked well.

The 1824 election ended James Monroe's "Era of Good Feelings," leaving one political party of consequence: the Democrats. Jackson, Monroe Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, William Crawford, and Henry Clay vied for the White House. The electoral count nixed Clay. The others' fates, per the Constitution, depended on the House of Representatives. La Brea-esque muddying commenced. Unsubstantiated accusations had Clay promoting Adams in return for a cabinet job. Jackson accused the two of a "corrupt bargain," unleashing a Jacksonite jihad to denigrate Adams and Clay and impede their efforts to govern. The Junto created and supported dozens of newspapers to criticize the administration and champion Jackson.

The authors suggest varied readings of Jackson's motives. One omission: how the Junto financed its dirty work. Nevertheless, *Rise* is an interesting, informative, and balanced study of the seventh president. A kindred treatment of the Jackson presidency would be a welcome sequel. ***—Richard Culyer writes in Hartsville, South Carolina.***



The Rise of Andrew Jackson: Myth, Manipulation, and the Making of Modern Politics
By David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler
Basic Books, 2018; $32



Hickory Hype? *Jackson benefited from the efforts of a prototypical political image-polishing operation.*

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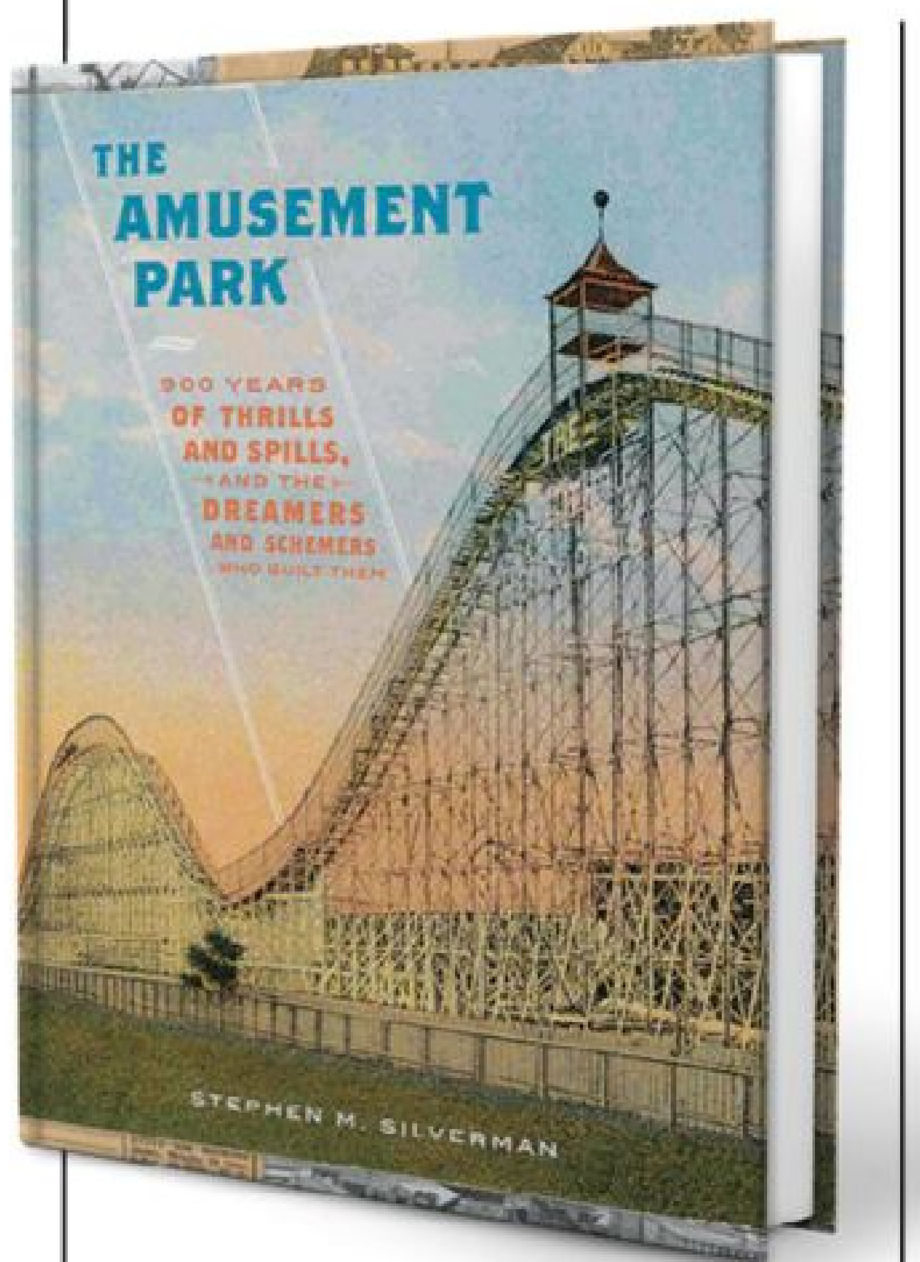
Fantasy Land
Circa 1900, Coney Island, New York, offered visitors a dizzying array of delights and diversions.

A WORLD AWAY


THE AMUSEMENT PARK
900 YEARS OF THRILLS AND SPILLS, AND THE DREAMERS AND SCHEMERS WHO BUILT THEM
STEPHEN M. SILVERMAN

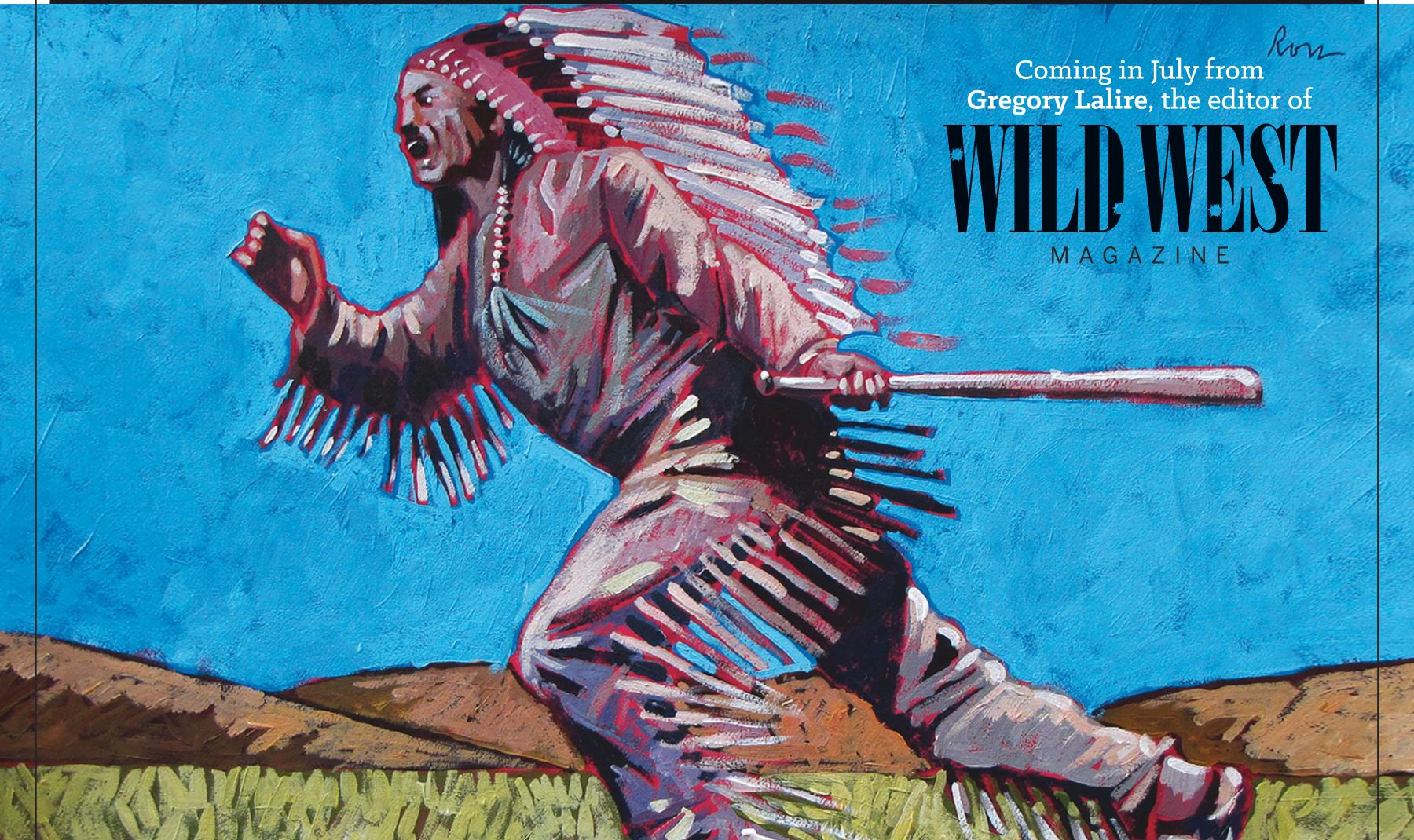
The Amusement Park: 900 Years of Thrills and Spills, and the Dreamers and Schemers Who Built Them
By Stephen M. Silverman
Black Dog & Leventhal, 2019; $35

To the designers sketching Disneyland in the early 1950s, Walt Disney gave a basic instruction. "I don't want the public to see the real world they live in while they're in the park," he said. "I want them to feel they are in another world." As Silverman tells it, Disney's dictum could be the mantra for every amusement park in history. Beginning with the first Bartholomew Fair just outside London's wall in August 1133 and extending to a Universal Studios theme park to open in Beijing in 2020, the author shows that rides and sideshows trade in fantasy. Parks had to adapt to tastes and technology, and their popularity has waxed and waned, but Silverman makes clear that they have always offered a haven where our inner children can escape the everyday. Today most parks embrace the Disney World model, offering on-the-grounds destination vacations. Silverman reminds us that in their heyday, amusement parks were local attractions adding zest to a trip to the beach or a weekend reason to ride the trolley to the end of the line. Between 1910 and 1920 "some 2,000 amusement parks blanketed the country, grounding twentieth century America's resolve to do things bigger and better, and solidifying President Theodore Roosevelt's conviction that 'play is a fundamental need.'" Parks were ubiquitous: 11 of Iowa's 14 cities had at least one, with 38 in Massachusetts and 62 in New York State, including six in New York City. Silverman does a good job of tracing the engineering and aesthetics of thrill rides—especially the roller coaster—but shortchanges sideshows, games of skill and chance, and wouldn't-eat-anywhere-else foods. His sense of structure confuses; as a then-to-now chronicle of amusement park history, *900 Years* is wanting. But as a plum pudding of vignettes about parks and their makers, this volume is a joy. Readers meet the likes of engineer Harry Traver, inspired by a flock of seagulls to create the ride that whirls passengers in a skyward circle; Dr. Martin Couney, who saved thousands of premature babies' lives by putting them in warming chambers and charging park visitors to view his "Child Hatcheries"; and Mary Elitch, who insisted on residing in the midst of her Denver gardens even after they became a major amusement park. **—American History *SCOTUS 101 columnist Daniel B. Moskowitz once did publicity for the rides and sideshows at the Illinois State Fair.***

BUYENLARGE/GETTY IMAGES

OUR FRONTIER PASTIME: 1804-1815

is an offbeat historical novel whose cast of characters includes non-playing Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, sure-handed second baseman Sacagawea, slugging first baseman York, swift center fielder John Colter, and the creative catcherman behind it all—Benjamin Batman Bunt



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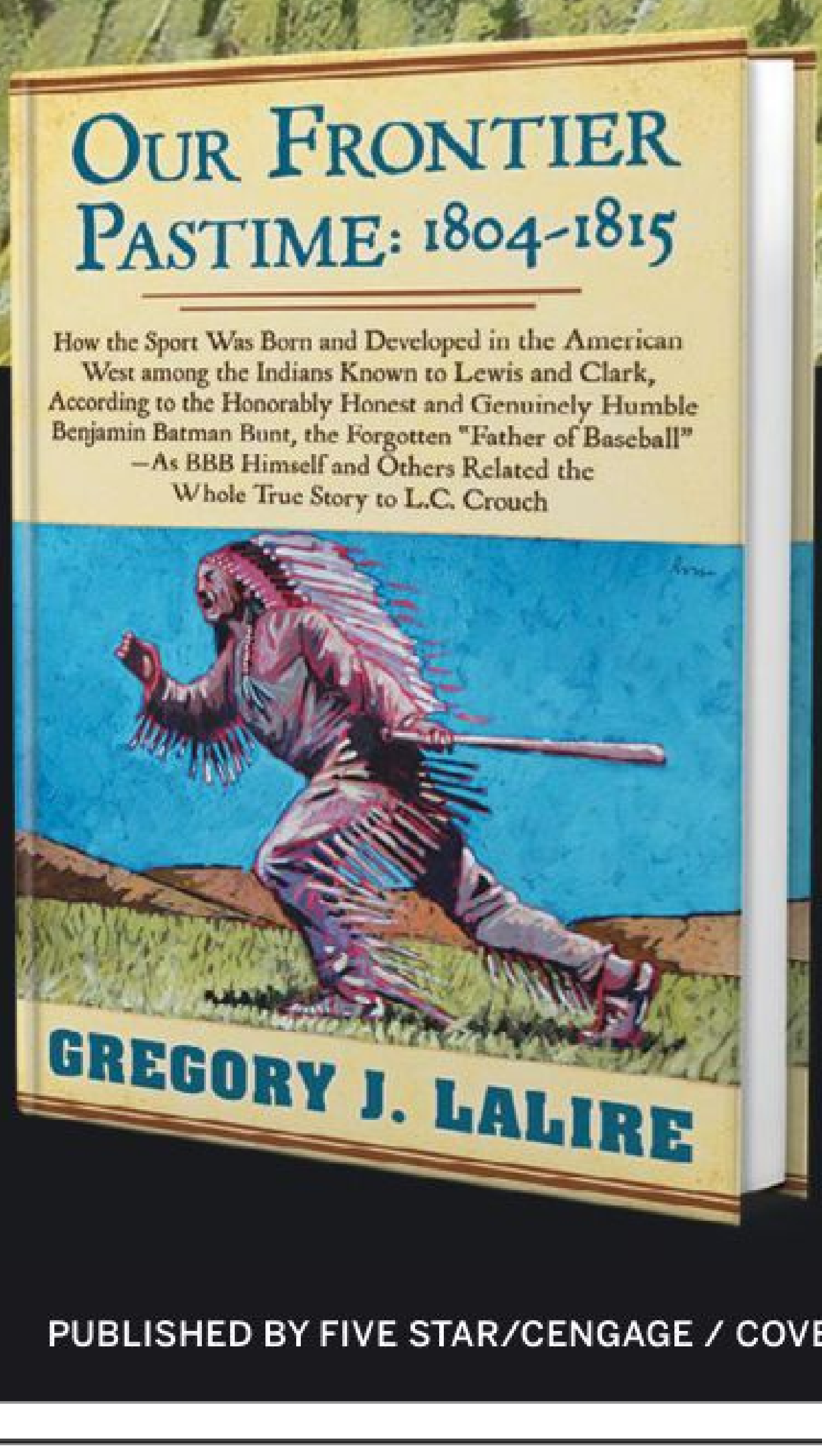

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PASTIME: 1804-1815

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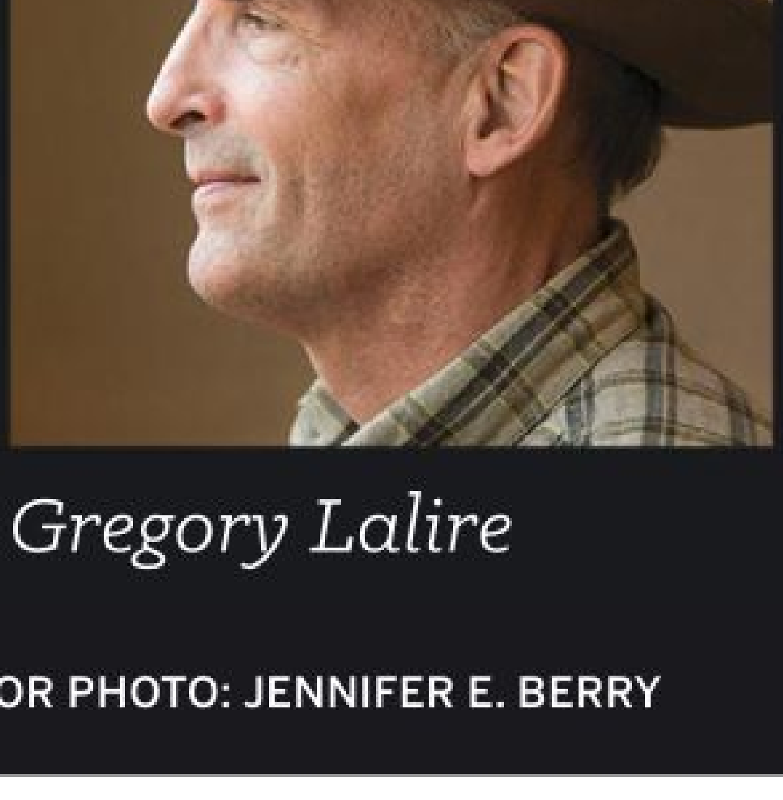

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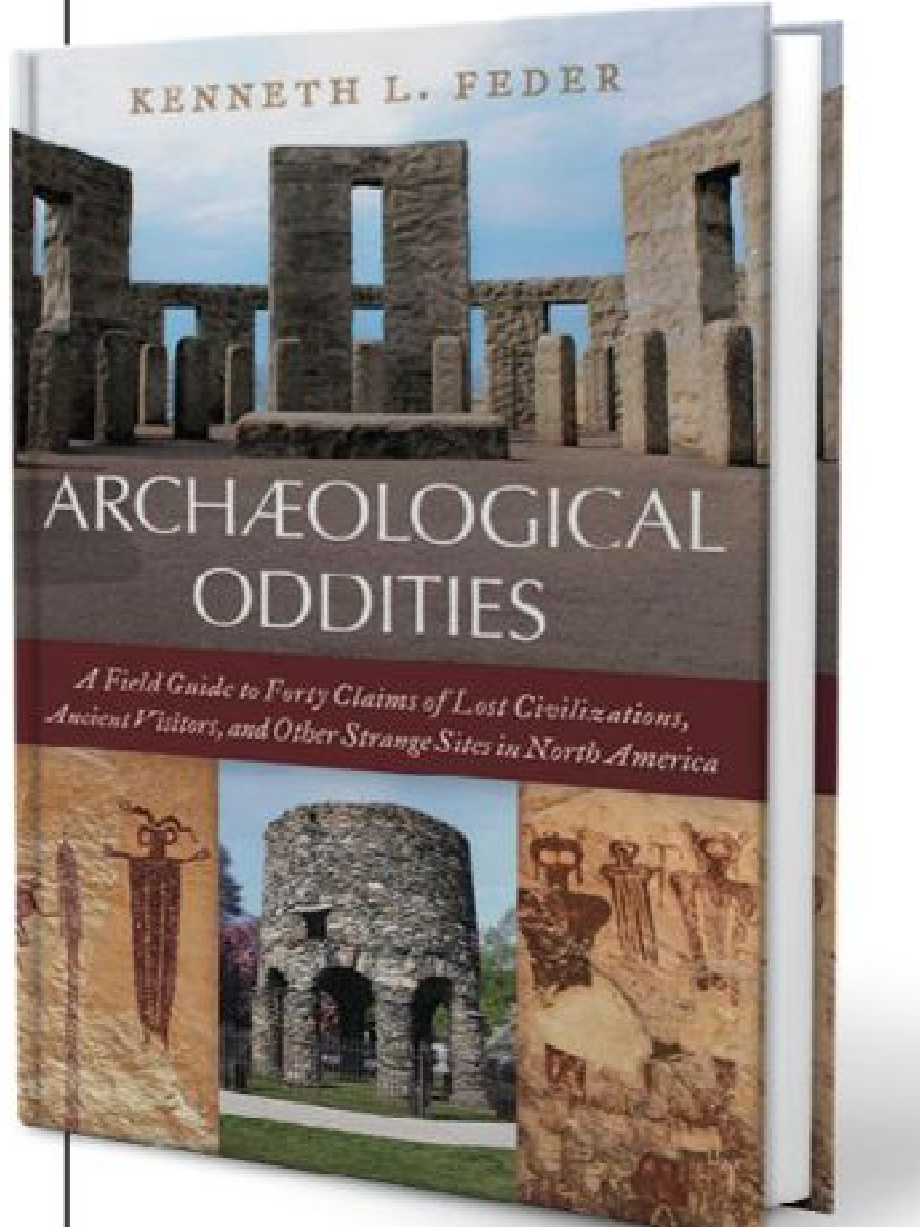
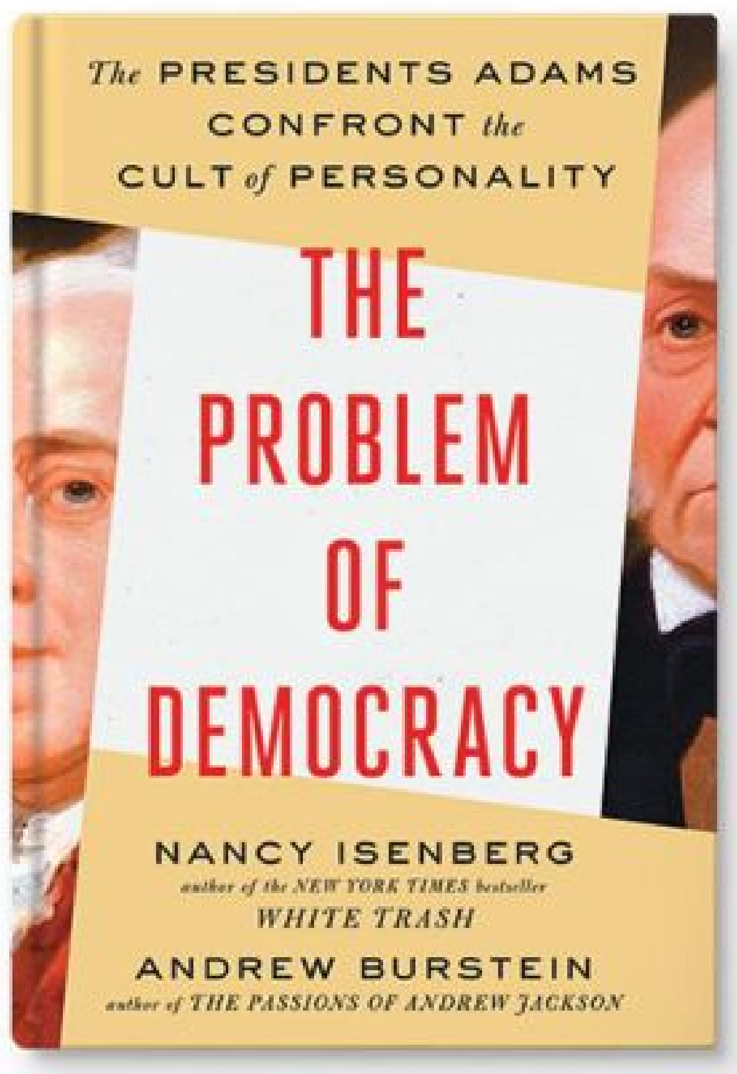
BUSTING ARCHEOHOAXES


KENNETH L. FEDER
ARCHÆOLOGICAL ODDITIES
A Field Guide to Forty Claims of Lost Civilizations, Ancient Visitors, and Other Strange Sites in North America

Archaeological Oddities: A Field Guide to Forty Claims of Lost Civilizations, Ancient Visitors, and Other Strange Sites in North America
By Kenneth L. Feder
Rowman & Littlefield, 2019; $36

Oddities* author and archaeologist** Kenneth L. Feder relishes the role of myth-busting tour guide to real and fake archeological sites. Homing in scientifically on dubious, comical, and/or puzzling claims for scores of "historical" locations, he shreds the hocus pocus enveloping categories along the lines of "Written Messages, Aliens, Lost Civilizations." Like a detective eyeballing crime scenes, he keeps asking what it is, whodunit, and why. With basic logic and ample humor, Feder lays waste many a specimen of pseudoarcheology, a realm he compares to fake news and its willing dupes. Many archeohoaxes shatter at the tiniest swipe of his hammer. Eyeing the "Westford Knight" petroglyph in the Massachusetts town of that name, Feder invokes preposterous accounts supporting the medieval yarn, asks "Why are we still talking about this?", and plows on, blasting fragile assertions on behalf of the engraving's authenticity like Dirty Harry shooting fish in a barrel—an image that often resurfaces reading *Oddities*. As much as Feder delights in dumping on bogus lore, he delights more in addressing the psychology of how specious nonsense seizes certain imaginations. For example, in several 19th-century "discoveries" like the "Kensington Runestone"—ostensibly unearthed by Olaf Ohman on his farm in north-central Minnesota in 1898, the spectacular artifact begs the question of why no one has found other Norse cultural material in or anywhere near Minnesota—Feder sees ethnic pride as a motivation. To explain the link between runestone and region, he points to the Minnesota Vikings and the Scandinavian cast of that football team's fan base. Similarly, he traces belief in a "Celtic village," Gungywamp, in Groton, Connecticut, to acolytes' Irish roots. An equal-opportunity skeptic, Feder details and debunks pilgrimage sites beloved by New Agers, the religiously inclined, and parties enraptured by extraterrestriality. In demolishing some deceptions, he sees evidence of profiteering. Whether explaining how bunco artists fabricated the "Michigan Relics" in a basement workshop or buried a sculpted "Cardiff Giant" in a pasture, the relentless inquisitor litters the landscape with discredited tales of fraud. Salting and peppering his North American field trip with "pesky facts," he offers disturbing examples of the human capacity for ignoring reality. Confronting situations that have many of us throwing up our hands in exasperation, Feder stands fast—patient, persistent, witty, and unblinkingly methodical. ***—Doug Dupin is director of the Palisades History Museum in Washington, DC.

ADAMS & ADAMS


The PRESIDENTS ADAMS CONFRONT the CULT of PERSONALITY
THE PROBLEM OF DEMOCRACY
NANCY ISENBERG
author of the NEW YORK TIMES bestseller WHITE TRASH
ANDREW BURSTEIN
author of THE PASSIONS OF ANDREW JACKSON

The Problem of Democracy: The Presidents Adams Confront the Cult of Personality
By Nancy Isenberg & Andrew Burstein
Viking, 2019; $35

In this volume's provocative portraits of the nation's first single-term presidents, the authors—professors of history at Louisiana State University responsible for 2010's *Madison and Jefferson*—argue convincingly that the Adamses' defeats illustrate a governmental defect especially acute today.

John Adams (1735-1826) was a modestly successful Boston lawyer when relations with Britain soured. Most historians other than the authors feel Adams's contributions peaked during 1774-77 when, while serving in the Continental Congress, he was among the staunchest advocates of independence. Named a commissioner to France in 1777, Adams *père* spent most of a decade in Europe. His aggressive support of American interests wore on French officials who preferred elderly, agreeable Benjamin Franklin. Adams considered Franklin far too compliant. Franklin saw Adams as impossibly hardnosed.

In his writings, the elder Adams echoed certain fellow founding fathers' dislike of aristocrats. Unlike Jefferson, however, he denied that the masses were morally superior, seeing humanity as selfish, short-sighted, and intolerant. His solution for America was a strong presidency to counterbalance tyranny by the majority. Had the word existed, Jefferson would have called Adams a fascist; he made do with "monarchist."

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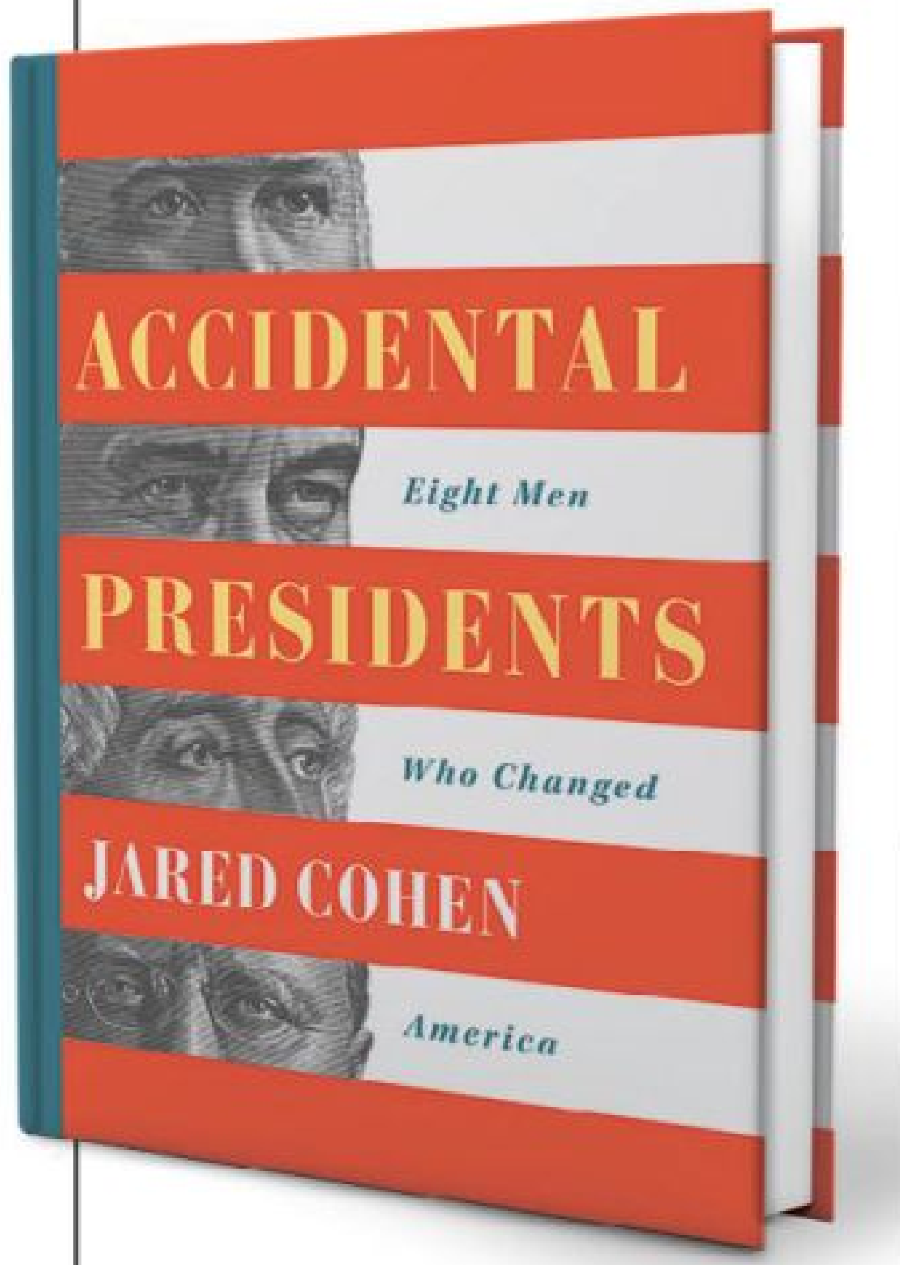
ANSWER: NONE. HOWEVER, IN 1980 A FATAL ACCIDENT CLAIMED THE LIFE OF A PARACHUTIST WHOSE TWO-PART STUNT WENT AWRY. HE'D MANAGED TO LAND SAFELY ATOP THE ARCH AND FROM THERE INTENDED TO BASE JUMP TO THE GROUND USING A SECOND PARACHUTE. THAT CHUTE FAILED.

American statesmen of the 1700s denounced political parties, then joined one, except for the profoundly antipartisan Washington—and Adams, who stayed an outlier due to lack of charm and a self-defeating aversion to hypocrisy. As president 1797-1801, Adams faced a Federalist Party led by Hamilton, who disliked him, and the Democratic-Republicans, headed by his disloyal vice president, Jefferson.

John Quincy Adams (1767-1848) was a chip off the tetchy block. At 10, he became his dad's secretary, prefiguring a lifetime in government culminating in service as Monroe's outstanding secretary of state. As prickly as pater, Adams the Younger sealed his presidential fate by infuriating fans of the nation's idol. Andrew Jackson won the 1824 election without a majority. Adams ran second; the House chose him. Dominating Congress, Jackson supporters ritually obstructed Adams. John Adams was perhaps America's most thoughtful presidential candidate and John Quincy Adams the most experienced, qualities the authors admit hold scant appeal to voters fond of figures yawping that they are regular guys who hate politics.

Problem offers no balm to readers depressed by current affairs except refuge in reading of two brilliant men who slipped through the cracks into the White House. ***—Mike Oppenheim writes in Lexington, Kentucky.***

RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE



Accidental Presidents: Eight Men Who Changed America
By Jared Cohen
Simon & Schuster, 2019; $30

Eight elected vice presidents have sat in the big chair. John Tyler, Millard Fillmore, Chester Arthur, and Andrew Johnson were mediocre term finishers. Four were re-elected. Theodore Roosevelt and Harry Truman served successfully. Calvin Coolidge and Lyndon Johnson left mixed legacies. Covering only elected VPs, Cohen skips the twice-elevated Gerald Ford.

William Henry Harrison barely knew Tyler, a last-minute choice who, once in the White House, resolved to be his own man, alienating kingpins Henry Clay and Daniel Webster. For opposing his predecessor's Whig platform of a national bank, protective tariff, and internal improvements, Tyler was read out of his party.

Short on options, Mexican War hero Zachary Taylor tapped Fillmore as his running mate. Taylor lost control of the debate on an omnibus bill addressing slavery and admitting California to the union. Fillmore eventually oversaw enactment of the Compromise of 1850. The weakened Whigs ceased to matter.

Lincoln's choice of Johnson, the only prominent Southerner supporting the Union, proved disastrous. Johnson's battles over Reconstruction with Radical Republicans led to his impeachment and acquittal by a solitary vote.

James Garfield, nominated without having run, reluctantly tapped as his sidekick Chester Arthur, a lazy hack. However, when a madman shot his patron, Arthur straightened up and flew remarkably right, remaining even-handed in patronage appointments and shepherding civil service reforms and a civil rights bill through the Congress.

Hyperactive Renaissance cavalryman Theodore Roosevelt, popular for Spanish-American War heroics, was foisted on William McKinley to get Teddy out of New York City so Tammany Hall could finagle in peace. Elevated by assassination, TR implemented a progressive trust-busting domestic agenda and a bellicose foreign policy.

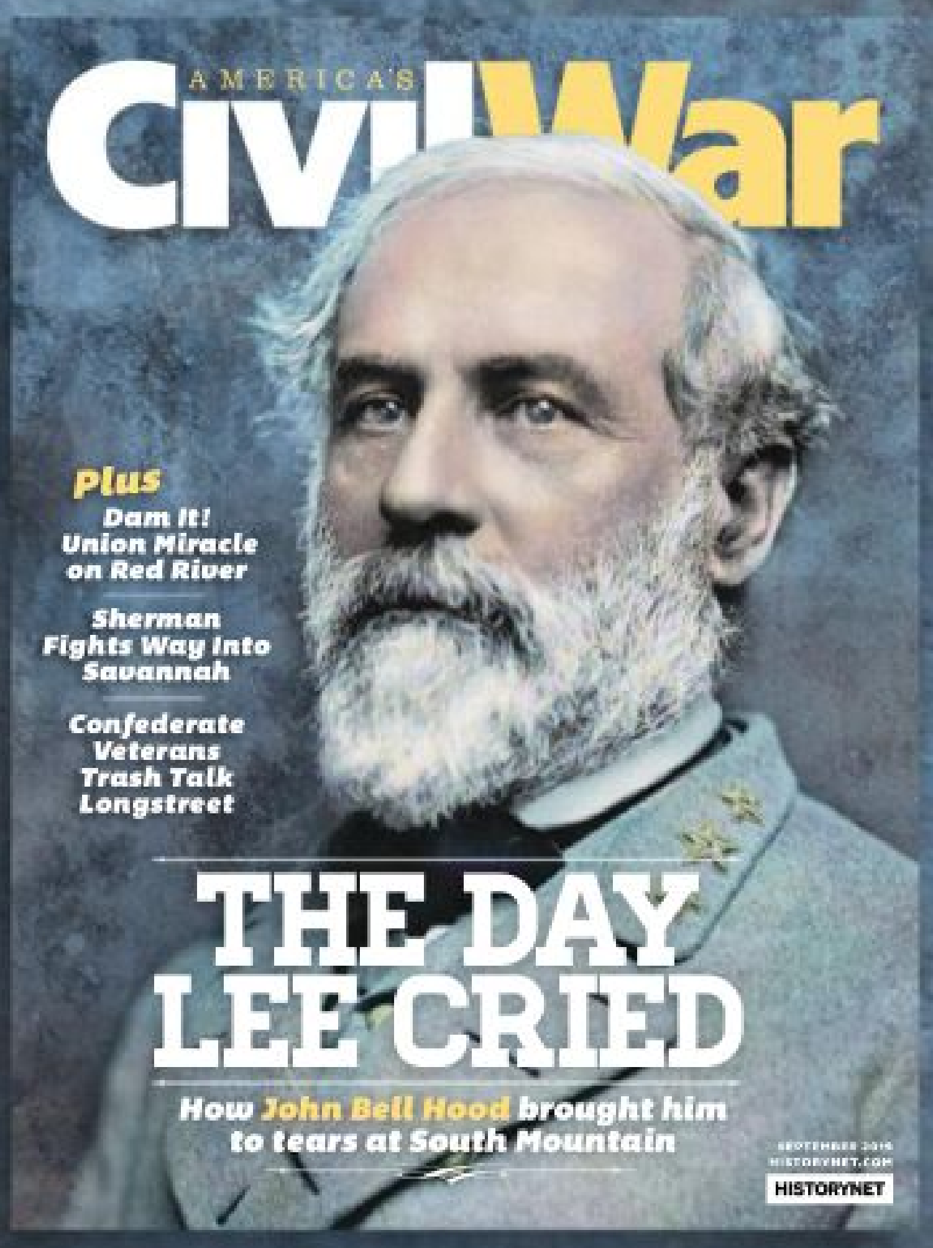
Presidentialish "second-rater" Warren Harding ran with "third-rater" Calvin Coolidge. The sleaze-ridden Harding administration helped kill its namesake; the image of "Silent Cal" is "about all that has survived of his legacy."

Franklin Roosevelt carried the country through the Depression and World War II but his final VP choice, made as he was knocking on death's door, confused everyone.

Vague on his predecessor's plans, Truman proved a quick learner, overseeing establishment of the United Nations, finally defeating the Axis, and implementing the Marshall Plan. Scornful of Kennedy and cadre, Johnson wielded the JFK myth to ram through historic fair housing and civil and voting rights laws and poisoned his legacy in Vietnam.

Comparing accidentals and antecedents and positing scenarios had the reaper not harvested, Cohen has delivered a well-written book that does not require a rainy day for reading. ***—Richard C. Culyer writes in Hartsville, South Carolina.***

It's Here!



AMERICA'S Civil War

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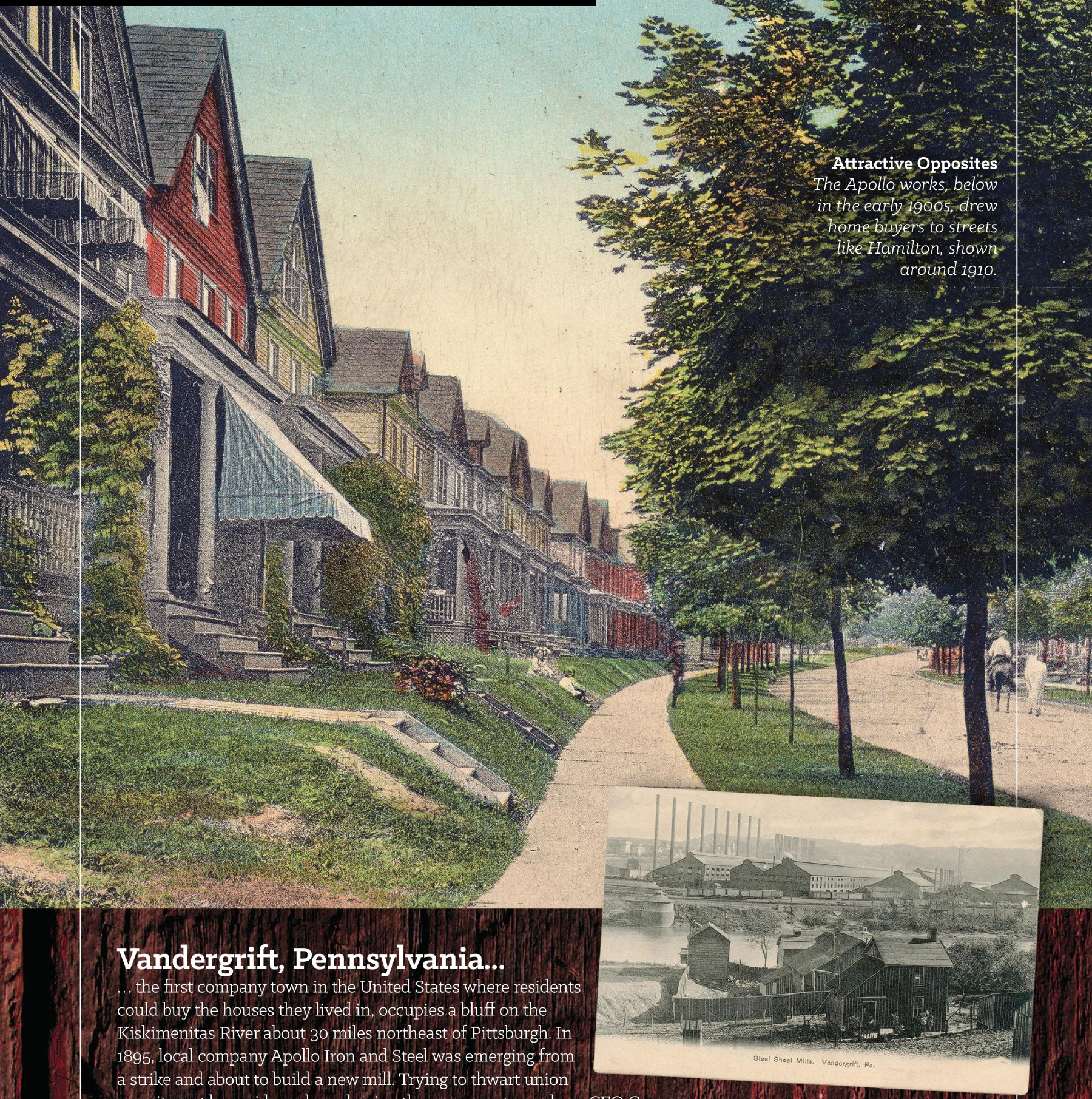
AN AMERICAN PLACE


Steel Sheet Mills, Vandergrift, Pa.

Attractive Opposites
The Apollo works, below in the early 1900s, drew home buyers to streets like Hamilton, shown around 1910.

Vandergrift, Pennsylvania…

… the first company town in the United States where residents could buy the houses they lived in, occupies a bluff on the Kiskimenitas River about 30 miles northeast of Pittsburgh. In 1895, local company Apollo Iron and Steel was emerging from a strike and about to build a new mill. Trying to thwart union recruitment by assiduously endearing the company to workers, CEO George McMurtry envisioned a gracious town whose residents owned their homes. Inspired by European-style "welfare capitalism," McMurtry hired landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted's firm to lay out Vandergrift, named for a Pennsylvania oil magnate, as a 650-acre urban gem with curving tree-lined streets, service alleys, a village green, a downtown, and a large park. The two-and-a-half-story Victorian houses Apollo built and sold strained buyers' budgets; many had to take in boarders. In the early 1900s, the Vandergrift Works was the world's largest steel rolling mill. Apollo shut down in the 1940s, succeeded by a series of mill operators. Vandergrift's current residents include workers from ATI Allegheny Ludlum, a rolling mill on the Kiskimenitas. —*Sarah Richardson*

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